United Nations A/C.6/73/SR.3

General Assembly
Seventy-third session

Official Records

Distr.: General
6 November 2018

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 3rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 4 October 2018, at 11.30 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Biang ..... (Gabon)

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Agenda item 111: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*)

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18-16512 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.30 a.m.

Agenda item 111: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/73/125) (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Perera** (Sri Lanka) said that Sri Lanka was committed to cooperating with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and welcomed its focus on capacity-building assistance to Member States.

2. As a country that had suffered under the yoke of terrorism for 30 years, Sri Lanka strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. All acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed; they were an attack on everyone; everyone should therefore show solidarity and unity of purpose in combating the scourge.

3. International networks with linkages to organized crime enabled terrorists to propagate their ideologies, raise funds and acquire arms. Transnational crime was funded by profits siphoned off from drugs, arms and human trafficking, environmental crimes, money-laundering and cybercrimes. Member States must pool their resources and share intelligence, data bases and expertise to address that issue.

4. Groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continued to erase human history through the deliberate destruction of irreplaceable cultural heritage sites. Wildlife and forests, flora and fauna were being destroyed due to transnational organized crime, impacting vulnerable communities and fragile environments. All Member States must pool their resources and share intelligence so as to combat the problem.

5. Many challenges had arisen as a result of the changing face of terrorism and violent extremism, including through the rapid advancement of technology, porous borders and large movements of persons fleeing violence. In particular, the international community must respond more aggressively to the growing global threat of foreign terrorist fighters. The media must help disseminate a culture of peace, dialogue and understanding rather than hatred, racism and intolerance. The United Nations must give special attention to protecting those most vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism, namely marginalized communities, women and children. Refugee and asylum status must not be abused to perpetrate terrorist acts.

6. Terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. In responding to the dehumanizing lawlessness of terrorists, States must continue to ensure respect for their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, international law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Sri Lanka stressed the importance of finalizing negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

7. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) said that in his country, terrorist groups had been regularly and indiscriminately attacking national defence and security forces, humanitarian and human rights organizations and fraternal international forces. Not even women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities or cultural and historical monuments had been spared. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the guilty verdict handed down by the International Criminal Court against the Malian terrorist Ahmad Al Faqi Al Mahdi for the destruction of the historic Timbuktu mausoleums and sites. His Government's efforts to achieve stability and promote development were undermined by the presence of terrorist organizations in the country and their criminal activities.

8. At the national level, Mali had elaborated a strategy to combat terrorism and violent extremism, together with a plan of action, in order to seek solutions to the root causes of terrorism, bearing in mind local realities. The goals were to support mechanisms for interfaith dialogue; train religious leaders; promote the traditional sources of stability in the community; introduce education on a culture of peace, human rights and democracy in school curricula; and finance projects for the empowerment of women and young people, in particular decent employment for youths.

9. A national legal framework in line with the country's international obligations was in place to promote the fight against terrorism; it included provisions for the punishment of perpetrators and the protection of victims. His Government had also adopted a national strategy to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, and a national unit for the processing of financial data had been operational since June 2008.

10. Mali underscored the importance of regional and international cooperation for combating organized transnational crime effectively. That awareness had led to the creation of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Niger and Mali to combat terrorism, transnational crime and trafficking in migrants. Mali called on friendly countries and international organizations to support the launch and operation of the joint force, which would help create conditions for development in those countries.

11. His delegation underlined the need for Member States to agree on a definition of terrorism without further delay in order to arrive at a shared understanding of the phenomenon, which would guarantee effective international cooperation for eradicating terrorism.

12. **Mr. Amolo** (Kenya) said that the repeated brutal attacks perpetrated by the Somalia-based Al-Shabaab terrorist group, of which Kenya had been the target for years, had had a negative impact on the country's infrastructure, physical and human capital, productivity and economic growth. Terrorist attacks and violent extremism had also resulted in a reallocation of resources from growth-enhancing investment to spending on national security. For that reason, enhancing regional and international cooperation was critical for the country's security.

13. No single nation could win the war against terrorism alone. That was why Kenya had ratified and domesticated all the international conventions against transnational organized crime, including the protocols on terrorism and associated crimes such as money-laundering, drug trafficking, human trafficking and corruption.

14. Kenya had prioritized the launching of counter-terrorism policies and strategies and had stepped up efforts to halt the financing of terrorism and extremism. To that end, it supported the efforts of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism to establish a global network of counter-terrorism centres to address new developments in terrorism, share capacity-building practices and experiences and identify opportunities for collaboration. His Government reaffirmed its readiness to work with the Organization in the areas of border management, including aviation and maritime security, support for returnees, capacity-building for security forces, empowerment of women in countering and preventing violent extremism, vocational training for youth, and efforts to counter terrorist narratives and support victims. In July 2018, Kenya had hosted a joint visit by the heads of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate to explore mutual priorities.

15. Kenya had domesticated the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism through its National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism. A revamped national counter-terrorism centre that coordinated efforts against radicalization and extremism had already recorded much success. Kenya had adopted an "all-of-government" and "all-of-society" approach to preventing and countering terrorism and was reviewing its national counter-terrorism strategy to better detect early signs of radicalization and thwart terrorist plots by strengthening community policing, involving women and children in peace and security efforts, and heightening community awareness. It supported international judicial and law enforcement cooperation, mutual legal assistance, extradition and the transfer of proceedings involving terrorism and other crimes. It had forged bilateral partnerships to build its counter-terrorism capacities. Regionally, it had forged strong law enforcement and judicial cooperation partnerships within the East African Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

16. Kenya remained a front-line State against terrorism in Africa. It called on the international community to continue supporting the work of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) through adequate and predictable financing, because even though Somalia was relatively stable, the war against Al-Shabaab terrorism was yet to be concluded.

17. His delegation encouraged Member States to continue efforts to elaborate a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

18. **Mr. Muhumuza** (Uganda) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Acts of terrorism were unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations and by whomsoever committed. The international community must address its root causes, including poverty, and it was also important to have a definition of terrorism that differentiated it from legitimate struggles.

19. His delegation supported efforts to improve the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to achieve a consensus regarding a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It endorsed the proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an international response to terrorism in all its forms.

20. Over the years, Uganda had succeeded in driving terrorist groups out of its territory, but they continued to operate from neighbouring countries. All States must cooperate to eradicate those groups. Under the auspices of AMISOM, Uganda had played a central role in fighting Al-Shabaab. Efforts should be stepped up to assist Somalia in developing institutions capable of dealing with terrorist organizations that regarded that country as a safe haven for their activities. Ultimately, recourse to the judicial process was imperative in combating terrorism. In the meantime, Uganda would pursue the military option. In that connection, Uganda expressed appreciation to the Government of Tanzania for facilitating the arrest of Jamil Mukulu, the head and

mastermind of the Allied Democratic Forces, who was currently on trial in Uganda. Uganda reiterated its concern that the toxic waste being dumped off the coast of Somalia might constitute an arsenal for terrorists in their quest for weapons of mass destruction. The dumping must stop, and those responsible must ensure that it was cleaned up.

21. **Mr. Locsin** (Philippines) said that during the consideration of the current agenda item at the seventy-second session of the Sixth Committee, his delegation had spoken about the ISIL-inspired terrorist attack on the city of Marawi, the most destructive act of terrorism in his country's history. He was pleased to note, however, that the Philippine armed forces and police had succeeded in liberating the city after five months of fighting, with the assistance of the United States and Australia. That attack had demonstrated not only the transnational nature of terrorism but the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the illegal drug trade, thanks to which a motley assortment of well-armed extremists, common criminals, mercenaries and foreign terrorist fighters had been able to band together to take control of the city.

22. The Philippines condemned terrorism anywhere in the world, however inspired. It abhorred terrorism in all its manifestations, wherever, by whomever and against whomsoever committed. Poverty was no excuse for terrorism. At the national level, the Philippines addressed terrorism and violent extremism through a whole-of-society approach, educating all members of society to resist the allure of terrorism. Although there was a long-term need to address the root causes of terrorism, once terrorism had taken hold, the first priority was to destroy it. Accordingly, his Government's response to terrorists was not to appeal to their conscience but to use force, which It was worth noting, however, that the Government did all that with the strictest regard for human rights.

23. The Philippines also acknowledged that terrorism was a global problem that no country could tackle alone. The leader in that global effort should be the United Nations, through its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. For the Strategy to succeed, the Organization and its institutional architecture must be coordinated, coherent and comprehensive. The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism must work closely with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities in supporting the implementation of that Strategy, bearing in mind respect for national ownership and priorities.

24. The fight against terrorism, which was only possible with the cooperation of those States that did not misuse that scourge as the long arm of their foreign policy, must include strengthening border controls, countering the false narratives of extremism and combating terrorist propaganda propagated on the Internet. In that connection, the Philippines endorsed the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism initiated by Kazakhstan. It should be borne in mind that terrorists took advantage of the chaos created by certain powerful States which interfered in the internal affairs of smaller States in regions of the world that they sought to control. After more than 20 years of discussions, it was high time to agree on a definition of terrorism and to agree on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

25. **Ms. Rivera Sánchez** (El Salvador) said that her Government reiterated its readiness to adopt effective measures to combat and eliminate international terrorism, which had an adverse impact on human, economic and social development. El Salvador had ratified and incorporated into domestic law a number of regional and international treaties aimed at combating international terrorism and preventing terrorist acts. El Salvador was aware of the importance of participating in and having its actions guided by a legal framework at both the international and the national levels in order to ensure that it could fulfil its commitments in combating terrorism, in line with the rule of law.

26. A special law on countering terrorist acts, passed in 2006, had set out the basic scope of the scope of the term "terrorism", based on the country's specific and historic circumstances, and had included provisions covering the prevention and prosecution of terrorist acts. El Salvador had also strengthened the institutional framework of the Office of the Attorney General, which continued to train prosecuting authorities on the application of the rules for preventing and combating terrorism and on the development of special investigation techniques. Over the past two years, the number of trials involving alleged acts of terrorism or membership of a terrorist organization or crimes contained in the special law had increased to 148.

27. Those developments demonstrated her Government's determination to continue to strengthen institutions involved in combating terrorism and to adopt measures to that end that were consistent with international human rights law, international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations. El Salvador would continue to participate in efforts to implement the decision adopted by the General Assembly of a decision regarding the establishment of a working group with a view to finalizing the elaboration of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

28. **Mr. Edrees** (Egypt) said that the global threat posed by terrorism was unprecedented, not only in the terms of the objectives sought or the methods used in terrorist attacks but also in the support sometimes provided by certain regimes which offered not just financing or safe havens but also media platforms for the promotion of terrorism. Terrorist groups also continued to use information and communications technologies to disseminate their ideology and to recruit fighters, obtain financing and perpetrate their crimes.

29. The international community must therefore use comprehensive and non-conventional means to eradicate terrorism, wherever it was found, in a determined and non-selective fashion. All types of measures should be used to address the causes of terrorism, and not just military or security measures. In that connection, Egypt stressed the importance of combating extremist ideologies and all means of promoting terrorism and ensuring that terrorists and those who supported their activities were held accountable. It was also important to counter the narratives which terrorists used to promote their activities and recruit new fighters, mainly among young people. In that connection, it was essential to implement Security Council resolution 2354 (2017) and the Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives.

30. At the national level, Egypt was close to defeating terrorism in the Sinai through its comprehensive "Operation Sinai 2018", which was not limited to military operations, but included a holistic development dimension aimed at achieving real progress and raising living standards in that part of the country. Sinai residents and tribes fully supported the Egyptian armed forces, police and all relevant bodies in efforts to eradicate terrorism. The Government's counter-terrorism efforts in the Sinai served the interests of the region and the world at large.

31. The magnitude of financing of weapons, training and advanced communications technologies received by terrorist organizations in some States in the Middle East facilitated the movement and travel of foreign terrorist fighters and reflected the extent of the support that terrorists received from certain regimes. While the General Assembly and the Security Council must formulate guidelines and measures to prevent and counter terrorism, greater attention needed to be given to the implementation of resolutions adopted, whether by assisting States in their implementation or by holding accountable the regimes that continued to support, finance, arm and incite terrorism and provide safe havens for terrorists.

32. Egypt had participated actively in the drafting of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to convene the High-level Conference of Heads of National Counter-Terrorism Agencies. Such meetings should be held on a regular basis. It was also important to support States through capacity-building in order to make them better able to implement the Strategy, in accordance with the principle of national ownership Egypt was prepared to participate in any such effort.

33. His delegation looked forward to progress being made at the current session on the elaboration of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, with a view to agreeing on a clear definition of terrorism. It was more urgent than ever to convene an international conference on countering terrorism, which would provide an opportunity to discuss issues preventing the elaboration of a draft convention.

34. Lastly, terrorism should not be associated with any religion, culture or people.

35. **Mr. Musikhin** (Russian Federation) said that, notwithstanding the military defeats of ISIL in the Middle East, the collapse of its territorial project and the decline in the flow of returning foreign terrorist fighters, branches of that organization continued to spread around the world and to recruit new members. The return of foreign terrorist fighters to their countries of origin and the recruitment of young people to join their cause allowed ISIL, Al-Qaida and related organizations to create an expansive network of sleeper cells around the world, with the support of lone fanatics that acted autonomously and unpredictably. An acknowledgment of those threats was at the heart of the General Assembly's decision to review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; the Russian Federation endorsed the outcome of the conclusions of the most recent review and had actively participated in the High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, held in June 2018.

36. Despite having differing views on aspects of the fight against terrorism, States had succeeded in maintaining a consensus on the Strategy and its four pillars. The Russian Federation hoped that a depoliticized approach to the fight against terrorism would prevail with regard to the establishment of a network of counter-terrorism coordinators, as proposed by the Secretary-General in his seventh report on the threat posed by ISIL (S/2018/770). In putting that initiative into practice, it was important to bear in mind the principles of equality of States, respect for State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

37. As part of the review, a number of points were important to bear in mind for the further development of the counter-terrorism work of the United Nations. Safe havens formed by terrorists on the Internet must be eradicated. The fight against online propaganda must be on a collective basis. It was important not to forget about persons who had fallen under the influence of ideologies of violence and terror. Together with law-enforcement measures, campaigns to counter propaganda needed to be launched, involving experts and religious leaders. That work must be based on Security Council resolution 2354 (2017) and the Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives. Channels that directly or indirectly sponsored the activities of terrorist groups, provided them with weapons and other materials and supported their economic transactions must be shut down. In that connection, his delegation paid particular attention to the reference in resolution 72/284 to the use of new methods and modern technologies in the financing of terrorism.

38. The military phase of the counter-terrorism operation in the Syrian Arab Republic had demonstrated that terrorist groups there had continued to receive military goods from outside sponsors. So-called non-lethal assistance that some States brought into the conflict zone under the pretext of helping the moderate opposition often fell into the hands of fighters. The problem of terrorist organizations being supplied with weapons required constant attention by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The Russian Federation had launched a discussion of that subject within the framework of the conference on combating the illegal supply of weapons in the context of the fight against international terrorism, held in September 2018 in Moscow. A discussion on the subject should continue in the Organization.

39. In resolution 72/284, the provision on the use of applicable international instruments as a basis for mutual legal assistance and extradition in terrorism cases was of fundamental importance. The General Assembly also encouraged States, in the absence of applicable conventions, to cooperate on the basis of reciprocity. The Russian Federation reiterated its proposal to improve extradition instruments. Given the need to reduce the time frame for granting mutual legal assistance requests in criminal cases, in 2017 the Russian Federation had updated its legislation regulating the central bodies responsible for such requests. One example of effective cooperation in counter-terrorism cases had been the extradition by the authorities of Germany, Greece and Slovakia of Russian citizens who had fought on the side of terrorists in the Syrian Arab Republic. He hoped that other States would also approach the issue of bringing criminals to justice on the basis of the principle of *aut dedere aut judicare*.

40. Unfortunately, many counter-terrorism decisions adopted in the United Nations, including by the Security Council, had not been implemented. Double standards, the practice of distinguishing between "good" and "bad" terrorists, and the use of radicals to pursue geopolitical projects and destabilize and overthrow unwanted regimes persisted. Support for terrorists, regardless of their motives, was entirely unacceptable.

41. For many years, his delegation had reiterated the need to conclude negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. To reach the finish-line, all parties to the negotiation process needed to demonstrate political will. The Russian Federation thanked Kazakhstan for its initiative to prepare the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, which it hoped would also give impetus to work on the draft convention. It called on all States to accede to the Code of Conduct.

42. Referring to the statement made the day before by Ukraine, he said that that delegation, instead of contributing to the coordination and unification of efforts, had once again used the Sixth Committee as a platform for disseminating its usual insinuations and fantasies, none of which had anything to do with the agenda item under consideration. The Ukrainian authorities should at long last begin to fulfil their undertakings under the Minsk agreements and resume the dialogue with their own people.

43. Not all States supported the introduction of prevention of violent extremism on the agenda of the United Nations, something which undermined the integrity of the international counter-terrorism legal framework. Discussions at the seventy-second session, including in the context of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review, had confirmed his delegation's conviction that the concept had no chance of obtaining universal support. It was instructive that the proposals which could have addressed existing contradictions had been blocked. Those States willing to seek compromises should take a closer look at the pioneering Shanghai Cooperation Organization Convention on Countering Extremism. The relevant specialized United Nations organs must take into account the disagreement on prevention of violent extremism in their work and should bear in mind that it played a subordinate role in the counter-terrorism effort.

44. The Russian Federation stood ready to support the work of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, above all by providing technical assistance to those States interested in it, upon their request, and taking into account the

analysis of the relevant bodies of the Security Council. It had helped to fund projects to combat foreign terrorist fighters and enhance the counter-terrorism potential of States in Central Asia, making a large financial contribution in that connection to the needs of the Office. The Office's programmes must be aimed at strengthening national institutions on the basis of the principle of national ownership and must be implemented in close coordination with regional organizations. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the strengthening of cooperation between the Office and the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

45. **Mr. Suárez Moreno** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said his Government condemned terrorist acts committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes and reaffirmed that terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilization or ethnic group.

46. International terrorism was one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. Through their actions, terrorist groups undermined the territorial integrity and political unity of States, thereby contributing to the destabilization of legitimate Governments and undermining their constitutional order, with the ultimate goal of overthrowing them. Those actions only had an adverse impact on the economic and social development, including the deliberate destruction of national infrastructure and institutions.

47. His Government expressed its full solidarity with victims of terrorism, which had also hit his country recently. It was a public, well-known and reported fact that on 4 August 2018, the President of his country had been the target of a failed assassination attempt, despite efforts to ignore or downplay the seriousness of the incident. In that connection, his delegation condemned the Government of the United States, which instigated, financed and supported a minority opposition group seeking to oust the Venezuelan Head of State, and provided a safe haven in its territory for some of the avowed masterminds and financial backers of the attempted assassination. It was therefore not surprising that that country and its satellites in the region, despite proclaiming their supposed condemnation of terrorism, had remained silent, which amounted to an endorsement of those abominable acts. His delegation called on them to comply with their obligation to either prosecute or extradite those criminals.

48. There was no such thing as "good" and "bad" terrorists. All terrorism must be prevented, combated and eliminated. In that connection, his delegation would soon submit a draft resolution on the need to strengthen international cooperation on the prevention and punishment of attacks and acts of terrorism directed against internationally protected persons. Efforts to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism, including its financing and terrorist narratives, required greater international cooperation and the adoption of new, effective measures in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, relevant international agreements and international law. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the Code of Conduct toward Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, which had been initiated by Kazakhstan, and called on States that had not yet done so to endorse it.

49. To address terrorism comprehensively, it was important to also look at its root causes. Poverty, inequality, injustice, lack of opportunity, oppression, foreign occupation and the violation of human rights and civil liberties were factors that promoted terrorism and were exploited by criminal groups to propagate hatred, intolerance, sectarianism and extremism. His Government therefore welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism to ensure greater coherence, complementarity and efficiency in the Organization's counter-terrorism programmes and the provision of technical assistance to Member States in implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to deal with requests for capacity-building, bearing in mind the specific needs and realities of the States concerned and recognizing that there could be no one-size-fits-all approach.

50. Now more than ever it was vital for States to ensure universal, non-selective compliance with the international instruments and United Nations resolutions prohibiting the transfer of weapons, the financing and training of terrorists, and the granting of safe havens to terrorist groups, and to promote a comprehensive and balanced implementation of the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The adoption of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism would be a valuable addition to existing international legal instruments.

51. **Ms. Cerrato** (Honduras) said that her country condemned any and all forms of terrorism as being manifestations of human cruelty for which there could be no political, ideological, religious or cultural justification. It was committed to the maintenance of international peace and security and aligned itself with all actions and agreements that strengthened the interrelations and obligations among nations with a view to promoting a culture of peace.

52. As a party to international instruments against terrorism such as the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, Honduras reiterated its commitment to combating terrorism, with full respect for the Charter of the United Nations and other rules of international law, human rights and international humanitarian law.

53. Lastly, it was important to undertake a holistic analysis of the relationship between terrorism and armed non-State groups, including gangs, since their activities had an adverse impact on the protection of human rights. Honduras joined other States in calling for the elaboration of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations A/C.6/73/SR.4

General Assembly
Seventy-third session

Official Records

Distr.: General
12 December 2018

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 4th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 4 October 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Ponce (Vice-Chair) ..... (Philippines)
later: Ms. Kremžar (Vice-Chair) ..... (Slovenia)

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Agenda item 111: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*)

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18-16513 (E)

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In the absence of Mr. Biang (Gabon), Ms. Ponce (Philippines), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 111: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/73/125)

1. **Mr. Yaakob** (Malaysia) said that his Government condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism, including by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which had caused nothing but loss of innocent life and damage to public property and infrastructure. The actions of terrorists were unacceptable. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality or ethnic group and it should not be equated with the legitimate struggle of peoples under foreign occupation for self-determination; almost all acts of terrorism were committed by groups that felt they had been brutally oppressed and had nowhere to seek redress. It was therefore vital to address the root causes of terrorism – otherwise the vicious cycle of terrorism and violence would never end.

2. Combating terrorism required a whole-of-nation approach, and Malaysia had accordingly taken the necessary steps to strengthen its legal frameworks and mobilize the relevant authorities to intensify enforcement efforts. Terrorism had been criminalized under legislation adopted in 2012 and 2014. At the international level, Malaysia was a State party to 9 out of 14 international legal instruments concerning counter-terrorism and to the 2007 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Convention on Counter-Terrorism; it had been a partner in the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL since September 2015.

3. Nevertheless, Malaysia remained concerned about the danger that returning foreign terrorist fighters might disseminate their ideology to the public at large. Winning the hearts and minds of the returning fighters and the public had become a key part of all the Government's efforts. Countering the narratives of terrorists and extremists, implementing deradicalization, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for foreign terrorist fighters and disseminating mainstream religious views to the public, especially young people, were among the measures taken to eliminate the threat of terrorism.

4. In addition to domestic efforts, strengthening bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation, enhancing the exchange of information, sharing expertise and improving counter-messaging mechanisms were necessary measures for countering a threat that did not recognize borders and nationalities. Malaysia welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/284, concerning the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and the launch of the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism. Those two important texts could contribute to the negotiation of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

5. In conclusion, he reaffirmed his delegation's support for the work of the United Nations in combating terrorism.

6. **Ms. Philips-Umezurike** (Nigeria) said that terrorist acts were insidious and usually destabilized the structures of governance, with adverse effects on development; hence there was a need to develop an all-inclusive, collaborative approach to deterring and annihilating terrorism. Nigeria was no stranger to the activities of terrorists, and in particular, Boko Haram, but its Government had confronted and decimated that group and had put in place bold and robust strategies to continue to address its heinous atrocities. In achieving that outcome, it had greatly been assisted by many neighbours and partners, especially Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Benin.

7. The counter-terrorism strategy of Nigeria was firmly anchored in respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. The strategy had succeeded in uniting Nigerians from all walks of life towards defeating Boko Haram. Under the strategy, religious leaders were encouraged to use their places of worship to enlighten their followers about extremism and intolerance. The programme for deradicalization, rehabilitation, reorientation and reintegration of repentant Boko Haram members, a victim support fund, a presidential initiative for the north-east and a safe school initiative had facilitated humanitarian relief, socioeconomic stability and the resettlement of persons displaced by Boko Haram.

8. The war against terrorism on all fronts could only be won through the resolve of all States Members of the United Nations to work together and to ensure full compliance with all United Nations resolutions and conventions against terrorism and its financing, as well as with other instruments adopted at the regional level. She reaffirmed her Government's commitment to work closely with all United Nations counter-terrorism entities, consistent with its faith in the need for a collective fight against terrorism.

9. **Mr. Atlassi** (Morocco) said that the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 72/284 on the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the convening of the first United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-

Terrorism Agencies of Member States had sent a strong message about the international community's determination and solidarity in the fight against terrorism. In 2014, the world had witnessed the shocking takeover of large swaths of territory by terrorist groups and an unprecedented proliferation of terrorist groups affiliated with ISIL and Al-Qaida, groups that were bereft of all legitimacy under Islam. He reiterated his country's condemnation of terrorism in all its forms. Nothing could justify a terrorist act, and terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

10. Although ISIL had been defeated on the battlefield, its murderous ideology endured on social media, through which innocent youngsters were still being recruited. Its defeat had merely engendered new challenges: uncovering sleeper cells and lone wolves; exploiting the databases of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL); and crafting deradicalization and reintegration plans. In view of the return of foreign terrorist fighters, regional and international cooperation, especially on border security and the exchange of information was important, border security must be reinforced, and suitable means for the reintegration of such fighters, especially women and children, must be sought, as suggested in resolution 72/284.

11. Morocco was a co-Chair of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which had become a formidable counter-terrorism platform, having produced memorandums on best practices in border security and management and stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, such as the Hague-Marrakech Memorandum on Good Practices for a More Effective Response to the FTF Phenomenon, adopted in 2014.

12. At the national level, Morocco had developed a strategy in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions that focused on security governance, upgrading of the legal framework for combating terrorism, human development, and adoption of new laws and religious reforms, including the institution of an academic authority responsible for interpreting passages from the Qur'an and the Hadith; programmes to deradicalize, rehabilitate and reintegrate foreign terrorist fighters; and the training of young preachers in the precepts of dialogue, tolerance, moderation, coexistence and respect, which the Muslim religion advocated.

13. Morocco had acceded to nearly all United Nations counter-terrorism instruments, and its deep commitment to international counter-terrorism efforts had recently been demonstrated by its signing of the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism.

14. **Mr. Moussa** (Djibouti) said that the past two decades had witnessed a growing entanglement of traditional and non-traditional factors of insecurity. Eradicating terrorism and preventing violent extremism called for a multi-dimensional approach based both on enhanced involvement of the people and on better cooperation among national, regional and international institutions. His delegation accordingly applauded the convening by the Secretary-General of the first High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States in June 2018. While unequivocally supporting the reforms of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture recently undertaken, he wished to emphasize that they would lack efficacy unless they were accompanied by enhanced bilateral technical assistance, capacity-building and transfer of technology.

15. Eastern Africa had been one of the first regions to be victim of the ideological assaults and attacks perpetrated by extremist terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab. Following their successive experiences of bloodshed, the States members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development had become more resilient in the face of terrorism, and in February 2017, the Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, which his country had the privilege of hosting, had been born. The Center, the first of its kind in Africa, was devoted to strengthening regional coordination and developing a counter-narrative against extremist rhetoric transmitted through social media.

16. The purpose of the Center was in line with the action taken by Djibouti over the past ten years. As a bridgehead for international efforts to combat terrorism in the Horn of Africa and piracy in the Gulf of Aden, Djibouti had been quick to understand the harmful role of groups propagating extremist ideologies. In 2014, it had adopted a proactive approach, organizing meetings with the main religious leaders of the region to identify methodological tools for combating ideological recruitment targeting the most socially and intellectually vulnerable segments of society. The Government's counter-terrorism strategy was based on theological dialogue, the voluntary involvement of young people in public endeavours, and respect for and promotion of individual and collective freedoms.

17. Given its belief in a culture of peace and in international cooperation, Djibouti had recently signed on to the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World

Free of Terrorism and invited all States that had not yet done so to sign it as well.

18. **Mr. Shi** Xiaobin (China) said that international counter-terrorism was currently undergoing complex and profound changes. On the one hand, the international community had made progress in its military campaign against terrorism, resulting in the collapse of ISIL in the Middle East. On the other hand, the frequent occurrence of terrorist acts had not been fundamentally reversed. There was still a long way to go to eliminate international terrorism. As terrorism was a threat to all mankind, the international community should make a concerted effort to address it.

19. First, it must work hard to build a consensus, strengthen cooperation, reject double standards and geopolitical interests, and adopt a zero-tolerance and non-selective attitude towards terrorism. It must resolutely fight terrorists, regardless of where they were, what pretexts they used, which countries they targeted and what means they adopted. It should encourage dialogue among different ethnic groups and religions to avoid associating terrorism with any specific ethnic group or religion.

20. Second, the international community must also address both the symptoms and the root causes of terrorism. There were complex underlying causes of terrorism, but in the final analysis, it was directly linked to severe deficits in development, security and governance. All countries should be committed to eradicating poverty, improving people's livelihood, solving development problems and embracing a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. They should work towards advancing global security governance and new international relations featuring respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation.

21. Third, all countries should support the adoption by the United Nations and the Security Council of a leading and central role in international counter-terrorism cooperation. Member States must conscientiously implement relevant Security Council resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and adopt a multi-pronged approach to combating terrorism. China expected the United Nations to fully unlock its potential and to do more towards eliminating international terrorism.

22. Fourth, in counter-terrorism operations, it was necessary to comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the countries concerned, and observe the rules of international law governing the use of force and punishment for crimes. China looked forward to the speedy conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. To date, it had established bilateral and multilateral counter-terrorism consultation mechanisms with more than 20 countries and participated in counter-terrorism cooperation efforts under a variety of international organizations.

23. China itself was a victim of terrorism. Combating the violent terrorist forces of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement was an important part of the international fight against terrorism. In recent years, the terrorist organization had stepped up its collusion with international terrorist forces, thus constituting a growing threat to regional and international security. His Government hoped that the international community would continue to support China in its efforts, through its counter-terrorism activities, to safeguard the security and stability of the region and the world at large.

24. **Mr. Thein** (Myanmar) said that no country was immune from modern-day non-traditional security challenges and terrorism. No country could effectively deal with terrorism alone. In recent years, the emergence of home-grown, lone-wolf terrorists had generated unprecedented fear and uncertainty in societies, since most terrorist attacks were directed against soft targets. The collective response to terrorism was difficult owing to the existence of numerous parallel and interlinked global terrorist networks. In that respect, the return and relocation of foreign terrorist fighters had become an evolving threat. Now more than ever, it was crucial to intensify concerted multilateral efforts to respond effectively to the increasingly transnational and multifaceted nature of terrorism. A comprehensive approach must be followed, in line with United Nations resolutions, including those on the reviews of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

25. Myanmar strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whoever committed. No religion, race, nationality or ethnicity should be associated with the radicalization and violent extremism that led to terrorism, nor should any be used to justify terrorism or terrorist acts. The Government of Myanmar had enacted counter-terrorism and anti-money-laundering legislation in 2014 and was closely cooperating with INTERPOL and other international counterparts to counter terrorism both at the regional and the international levels. While intensifying its counter-terrorism efforts, Myanmar had also placed emphasis on preventive measures against violent extremism by promoting tolerance and interfaith and intercultural dialogue among different communities.

26. Myanmar had had painful experiences with terrorism in recent years. The crisis in Rakhine State in October 2016 and August 2017 had been ignited by the unprovoked and premeditated attacks of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), which had killed many security personnel and hundreds of innocent civilians, including members of ethnic minorities and pro-government Muslims. Because of such inhuman killings, thousands of people had fled their villages to other parts of Rakhine State. Terrorist brutality had also led to a massive exodus of Muslims to a neighbouring country. According to international intelligence sources as well as information from the interrogation of apprehended ARSA members, ARSA was guided and supported by a number of foreign terrorist groups, including Al-Qaida and ISIL, which had previously called for jihad against the Myanmar Government. If ARSA was allowed to operate freely, it would soon become part of the regional terrorist networks.

27. His Government denounced any form of political, moral or material support for terrorism and urged all States to refrain from such activities. Sheltering terrorist elements and discounting or ignoring the atrocities committed by any terrorist group amounted to condoning or supporting terrorism. It also was important to ensure that refugee status or humanitarian cover was not abused by terrorists for their own purposes, and to monitor the activities of terrorists, including those of ASRA and its networks in the region and beyond, in order to prevent further terrorist attacks in the region.

28. In conclusion, he reiterated his Government's commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and to providing support to its regional and international partners in the global fight against terrorism.

29. **Ms. Pejic** (Serbia) said that terrorism and violent extremism were global phenomena. In order to counter them, continued and widespread cooperation among States was needed. In that context, the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was of paramount importance. After its visit to Belgrade in March 2013, the Counter-Terrorism Committee had concluded that Serbia was the readiest and best-equipped country in the region to address possible terrorist acts. The Committee had made a follow-up visit from 27 to 29 March 2018 and had reported that evident progress had been made in all areas. It had confirmed the commitment of Serbia to implementing the Committee's recommendations and its full awareness of the individual areas and objectives set out in Security Council resolutions.

30. The number of foreign terrorist fighters recruited in the Western Balkans and South-East Europe was not negligible: almost 1,000 persons from the Western Balkans had been engaged in Syria and Iraq, many of them participating in brutal and suicide attacks. So far, about 40 persons from Central Serbia had taken part in the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, representing the lowest percentage of foreign terrorist fighters in the region, although the situation was altogether different in the Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija, from where the highest percentage of foreign terrorist fighters travelled to foreign battlefields.

31. The country's Criminal Code provided for the punishment of Serbian citizens who participated in armed conflicts abroad, or in the organization thereof. However, the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters was a challenge necessitating regional cooperation. Serbia had undertaken numerous measures to address the problem, including operational activities carried out either independently or in cooperation with partners, especially in the Western Balkans and in South-East Europe.

32. The prevention of violent extremism and radicalism leading to terrorism was of great importance. In December 2017, Serbia had amended its legislation on the freezing of assets to ensure more effective regulation of questions relating to the list of persons designated by the Security Council and other international organizations of which Serbia was a member, as well as the designation procedure itself. Serbia had also passed a law on the prevention of money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, which was aligned with the standards of the European Union and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force.

33. **Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan) said that terrorism and related criminal activities were unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation; they constituted serious crimes and must be prosecuted. The shielding and glorification of terrorists must not be tolerated.

34. The sensitive geographical location of Azerbaijan and unresolved armed conflicts in the region increased transborder threats. Since the end of the 1980s, as a mean of realizing groundless and unlawful territorial claims and as a method of warfare, terrorist attacks had been repeatedly perpetrated in his country, claiming the lives of thousands of its citizens. It was critical to intensify conflict resolution efforts in various parts of the world. Areas of armed conflict, especially territories under foreign military occupation, often created conditions conducive to exploitation by terrorists,

separatists and other organized criminal groups and networks.

35. All States must comply with their international obligations, including under relevant Security Council resolutions, to ensure that their respective territories were not used for terrorist, separatist or other related activities, in particular for financing and providing, directly or indirectly, any support to such activities. Terrorist acts carried out in the context of armed conflict could amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity, entailing individual criminal responsibility. International cooperation in criminal matters, with mutual legal assistance as an important component, was the key to combating impunity for acts of terrorism and related criminal offences.

36. Azerbaijan reiterated its determination to actively contribute to the process of reaching an agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The General Assembly had recently reviewed the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and unanimously adopted a resolution which set a clear direction for the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations and Member States over the next two years. Azerbaijan commended Kazakhstan for initiating the process leading to the adoption of the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism.

37. The war on terrorism could not and must not be used to target any religion or culture. Support by the United Nations for successful initiatives on intercultural and interreligious dialogue and the culture of peace and multiculturalism was essential for promoting tolerance, building inclusive and resilient societies and overcoming stereotypes and misconceptions.

38. **Mr. Issetov** (Kazakhstan) said that in counter-terrorism the challenge was to combat the new type of terrorism being perpetrated by ISIL and Al-Qaida, which could be described as low-cost, localized terrorism. As a form of autonomous jihad, it was perhaps even more deadly, since it was being promoted locally by its supporters. The problem was compounded by foreign terrorist fighters. Central Asia constituted a potential target of terrorist groups due to the inflow of militants returning from Syria and Iraq. The spread of terrorist ideology through social media and the dark web, and the radicalization of vulnerable segments of society, was being combated, inter alia, through the implementation of the recommendations for improving the country's counter-terrorism activities made by the Counter-Terrorism Committee following its visit to Astana in May 2016.

39. In that connection, the Government had increased its budget to fight terrorism and extremism by fostering a tolerant religious consciousness and exhibiting zero tolerance for radical ideologies. It had also updated its laws concerning the arms trade and migration and had ratified 16 of the 19 universal legal instruments to prevent terrorism. His Government was also participating in regional cooperation efforts, including the establishment of intelligence and information exchanges and enhanced early warning signals systems, the harmonization of legislation, stricter border and customs controls, capacity-building and other practical joint measures. A common understanding of the term "terrorism" was needed to ensure that offenders were brought to justice; hence, it was important to finalize the comprehensive convention on international terrorism as soon as possible.

40. Kazakhstan expressed its warm appreciation to the countries that had signed the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, which it had initiated. His delegation encouraged other Member States and observers to become signatories to the Code, a manifestation of strong political will that would help to eliminate international terrorism and halt the related activities of drug trafficking, illegal trade in natural resources and cultural artefacts and the use of new technologies and payment methods by terrorists.

41. The time was now for States to work together to protect critical infrastructure, exchange biometric information on terrorists between regional and international databases, obtain timely information about groups and individuals with destructive intentions, enhance best practices and forensics, and fight terrorist ideas on the Internet and in cyberspace. Kazakhstan was committed to every possible multilateral action taken in a relentless effort to ensure a safe and secure world.

42. **Ms. Kim** Hye Mi (Republic of Korea) said that her country condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated that all acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation and whenever, wherever and by whomever they were committed. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and all counter-terrorism measures should be in compliance with international law, in particular, international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law.

43. Emerging new threats and evolving trends of international terrorism made it more difficult for national Governments, regional bodies and the international community to deal with that scourge. Nonetheless, enormous efforts were being made to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism on various fronts. In that connection, her delegation

commended the United Nations for its efforts, in particular those of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. It welcomed the convening of the first United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States and the signing of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

44. The Republic of Korea was aware that Member States had the primary responsibility for countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. In that connection, her Government had passed the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2016 and established a centre to oversee the implementation of that law. It had also adopted its National Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, in which it had expressed its commitment to encouraging community dialogue and engagement, empowering youth and preventing misuse of the Internet and other media by terrorist groups.

45. At the regional level, her country was making continuous efforts to facilitate interregional dialogue and information-sharing on the prevention of violent extremism. It was a party to most of the international conventions regarding counter-terrorism and was a partner in the Tech Against Terrorism initiative. Recently, the Government had sponsored the launch of a knowledge-sharing platform which assisted small tech companies in assessing and mitigating their risks of being exploited by terrorists, while providing guidelines for content regulation.

46. Preventing the spread of violent extremism was key to curbing future terrorism. She stressed the importance of engaging communities and empowering young people to make society more resilient to terrorism and violent extremism. Increased civil society and private sector involvement would help establish more creative and inclusive ways of combating international terrorism.

47. **Ms. Ighil** (Algeria) said that preventing and combating terrorism required multifaceted cooperation at the national, regional and international levels. The battle could clearly not be limited to repressive measures; a coherent political strategy was also needed.

48. Having suffered from the devastating effects of terrorism during the 1990s, Algeria had emerged as a safe and stable country in a region prone to instability and terrorist threats. It maintained a high level of vigilance and commitment in the fight against terrorism and radicalization. It focused its efforts on policies, strategies and development programmes to prevent the exclusion, marginalization, stigmatization and social injustice that were often exploited by terrorists in their propaganda for mobilization and recruitment purposes. Its efforts also involved promoting democracy, national reconciliation, deradicalization, human rights, good governance and living together in peace as effective antidotes to violent extremism and terrorism. Securing the borders and pursuing the fight against residual terrorism were also part of her Government's overall counter-terrorism strategy.

49. At the regional level, Algeria had developed strong bilateral cooperation ties with its neighbouring countries in key areas related to the fight against terrorism. In the Sahel region, the current context required both coordination and strengthening of the capacities of the countries of the region on the basis of national ownership. Algeria was engaged in several cooperation mechanisms to strengthen border control measures as well as intelligence-sharing among the Sahel countries.

50. At the African level, Algeria hosted the headquarters of the African Police Cooperation Organization (AFRIPOL) and the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), an African Union body that offered a high level of expertise in the fight against terrorism. A high-level meeting on countering terrorist financing in Africa had been held in Algiers in April 2018. In addition to ideological propaganda developed by terrorist groups and their sponsors via the dark web and encrypted platforms, financing remained key for radicalization and recruitment, especially among the most vulnerable segments of the population. The nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism in West Africa had been thoroughly discussed during a meeting organized by Algeria and Canada and held in Algiers in October 2017.

51. **Mr. Kazi** (Bangladesh) said that, while welcoming the outcome of the sixth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, his country encouraged Member States to approach the process with further courage and conviction, with a view to accommodating diverse views on combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It was self-defeating to assume that there was only one template for combating terrorism. Any unwarranted divergence by Member States on fundamental issues only served the interests of terrorists and their sympathizers. Bangladesh welcomed the holding of the first United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States in June 2018.

52. Despite its institutional efforts, Bangladesh still had difficulty with the duplication and overlapping in the work of different United Nations entities in support

of national entities. It remained engaged with the entities in question to rectify such problems and urged donors not to disperse resources among different bodies for more or less the same purpose. The need for United Nations bodies to undertake projects in response to nationally identified priorities instead of priorities identified from the perspective of resource availability could not be overemphasized.

53. The zero-tolerance approach to terrorism of political leaders in his country had resulted in the dismantlement of the operational capacity of certain home-grown terrorist outfits that claimed affiliation with regional or international networks. Sustained investments in capacity-building for the relevant law enforcement, intelligence and border management authorities had allowed Bangladesh to live up to its commitment not to allow its territory to be used for terrorist acts against any of its neighbours. Demonstrable progress had likewise been made in combating the financing of terrorism and in weakening the nexus between terrorist groups and transnational organized criminal networks.

54. The legal regime in Bangladesh gave effect to relevant Security Council resolutions through a specific institutional mechanism. The Government was currently setting up several special tribunals for prosecuting terrorism-related cases. Timely exchange of information for tracking and intercepting the movement of foreign terrorist fighters, especially those from expatriate communities abroad, was of special importance. His Government remained supportive of concluding a comprehensive counter-terrorism convention with a view to developing universal standards for counter-terrorism strategies and operations, in lieu of selective, unilateral benchmarks and criteria.

55. A whole-of-society approach had proved to be useful in preventing the spread of violent extremism and radicalization. The engagement of civil society in such initiatives had enhanced the awareness of law enforcement personnel of their human rights obligations. The authorities had maintained heightened vigilance along border areas with Myanmar since August 2017 after the influx of more than 700,000 Rohingya fleeing violence and persecution in Rakhine State. His Government reiterated its concern over the unfounded and repeated attempts by Myanmar to vilify the entire Rohingya population under the pretext of countering threats posed by a fringe extremist group. It urged Myanmar to consider the root causes of the radicalization of alleged home-grown terrorist outfits and called upon it to work with relevant United Nations entities to address violent extremist trends among communities other than the Rohingya in Rakhine State. No State or non-State actor should attempt to take advantage of the vulnerable situation of the Rohingya to radicalize them in any way that could affect the national security of Bangladesh and the wider region.

56. Bangladesh remained concerned over the asymmetric attacks and threats, including from terrorists, faced by its peacekeepers in a number of theatres. From its experience on the ground, it was convinced that peacekeepers should not be asked to engage in counter-terrorism operations.

57. **Ms. Werdaningtyas** (Indonesia) said that no country was immune to the menace of terrorism, which respected neither borders nor boundaries, and no country – no matter how powerful – could tackle it alone. Recently, Indonesia had experienced horrific terrorist attacks in its second-largest city, Surabaya. It was horrible to see that the terrorists now involved their families in their operations. Despite common efforts, terrorism remained what it had always been – a massive scourge that undermined peace and threatened the political, social and economic order of countries throughout the world. It continued to evolve, bringing unique challenges. The progress being made to counter ISIL, for example, was being undermined by the emerging trend of the return and relocation of foreign terrorist fighters. Terrorists continued to take advantage of technology to spread their propaganda and recruit followers. Attacks by the lone wolf or self-radicalized person continued to take place.

58. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, faith, race, value, culture, society or group. Her Government condemned all manifestations of terrorism from whatever source and for whatever reason or motivation. In a broader context, the increasing trend towards terror and violent extremism militated against national development strategies and placed the younger generations in perpetual jeopardy.

59. Indonesia had implemented a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy using a combination of hard and soft approaches, including deradicalization in prisons and community and family engagement. Young people and women were empowered as agents of peace and builders of community resilience against the spread of violent extremism. A revised anti-terrorism law had also recently been adopted, intended to equip the country to better respond to the new tactics and methods of terrorists and to implement international anti-terrorism conventions and Security Council resolutions. Additional revised legislation would guide efforts to improve border security and restrict the potential egress of foreign terrorist fighters.

60. Indonesia was in the final stages of launching its national action plan on countering violent extremism, the main aim of which was to address the conditions conducive to violent extremism, including the process of radicalization. It adopted a whole-of-society and whole-of-Government approach, espousing the principles of gender equality and youth empowerment. In May 2018, Indonesia had organized a high-level consultation of world Muslim scholars, the purpose of which had been to support the message of tolerance.

61. Her Government had always been uncompromising in fighting money-laundering and countering terrorist financing, including by working closely with the Financial Action Task Force, to which it had been granted observer status in June 2018. Indonesia wished to become a full member of the Task Force in the near future. It welcomed the adoption by consensus in June 2018 of the resolution on the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, signifying the firm commitment of the international community to stand together to fight terrorism and violent extremism. Prospects for success lay only in unity and common effort.

62. The difference in positions of Member States regarding the comprehensive convention on international terrorism, although limited to a small number of issues, remained wide. The development of a legal definition of terrorism was crucial in order to ensure uniform responses to terrorism throughout the world. In conclusion, she welcomed the organization of the United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, which had provided an opportunity to build new partnerships and to improve international cooperation and information-sharing.

63. **Mr. Carrillo Gómez** (Paraguay), expressing solidarity with the families of victims of terrorism, said that his delegation reaffirmed its commitment to achieving a world free of terrorism. Paraguay condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reaffirmed that the fight against terrorism and the protection of human rights were complementary and mutually reinforcing endeavours. It would continue to support all initiatives against terrorism that were multilateral in nature and complied with international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law.

64. Against that background, Paraguay considered that the Security Council must scrupulously observe the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations to ensure the legitimacy, legality and proportionality of its counter-terrorism resolutions; it rejected any attempts to undermine the principle of prohibition of the use of force set out in the Charter, and favoured a restrictive interpretation of Article 41 of the Charter. It advocated the convening as soon as possible of a high-level international conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an organized response by the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

65. During its recent visit to Paraguay, the Counter-Terrorism Committee had been able to observe the efforts being made by the authorities to adjust to the international counter-terrorism framework in all its aspects and to implement policies to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. The Committee had also been able to confirm the country's need for technical assistance and specialized equipment to ensure that policies for preventing terrorism and related transborder criminal activities were effectively implemented.

66. Paraguay was continuing to work domestically and inter-institutionally to improve its normative and institutional framework for combating terrorism and protecting human rights and to incorporate the most relevant international instruments on the subject into its legal order. In that connection, it wished to point out the difficulty it was having in using documents in English to submit input and reports on counter-terrorism to international organizations, as was the case with the Overview of Implementation Assessment and the Detailed Implementation Survey sent out by the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

67. Lastly, the Government had recently promulgated legislation on seized assets and confiscated property and had signed international instruments on the punishment for offences relating to civil aviation and unlawful seizure of aircraft. As a developing country, Paraguay stressed the importance of international cooperation, in the areas of financing, development of human resources, transfer of technology and inter-institutional coordination, in the struggle against terrorism.

68. **Mr. Dieng** (Senegal) said that his country strongly condemned all terrorist acts and practices in all their forms and manifestations; they were all just as unlawful as they were unjustifiable, irrespective of by whom they were committed. While paying tribute to the victims of terrorism, to whom the date of 21 August was rightly dedicated, he condemned any assimilation of Islam to violence or faulty stigmatization of Muslims as being responsible for violence, of which they themselves were sometimes the main victims.

69. Since it was impossible to come to terms with the increasingly insidious threat of terrorism alone, there was an urgent need for cooperation among States, international institutions and regional and subregional mechanisms. He solemnly appealed to all States to make combating terrorism a truly global struggle. He welcomed the adoption by consensus in June 2018 of the resolution on the sixth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the holding of the first United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States. He also welcomed the adoption of the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism initiated by Kazakhstan. It was also becoming increasingly imperative to make the comprehensive convention against international terrorism a reality.

70. Senegal was continuing to strengthen its legal arsenal for combating terrorism and preventing the financing of terrorism. It was a member of both international and Islamic coalitions against terrorism and had entered into various bilateral agreements on joint patrols for defence and security forces, exchanges of information and mutual legal assistance. It was also working to eradicate the root causes of terrorism by promoting education, including religious education; strengthening dialogue among civilizations, religions and cultures; combating the prejudices and stereotypes that engendered the hatred that nourished terrorism; and creating the conditions for a decent life for all by combating poverty and promoting social justice.

71. **Ms. Bourhil** (Tunisia) said that the progress made in recent years in the struggle against terrorism, particularly in Iraq and Syria, where ISIL and Al-Qaida had seen their forces considerably diminished, represented only one victorious battle in a war that would drag on for some time. ISIL had adopted a new operational strategy by transforming itself into a clandestine global network. The return and relocation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families was an increasingly complex issue, generating considerable challenges as national authorities tried to set up legislative and operational frameworks to handle the problem. Those challenges were magnified by the passive and active involvement of women and children born in combat zones.

72. Another challenge was adapting to the evolving nature of terrorism, as the Internet was being used for purposes of radicalization and perpetration of terrorist attacks, especially with the emergence of new forms of financing, such as cryptocurrency, and the dark web. Public-private partnerships were indispensable in that regard, although caution was likewise needed: national strategies to remove terrorist content must conform to international obligations to respect individual liberties and States had to develop their expertise to face those significant developments.

73. The United Nations had been constantly evolving in order to confront the new challenges, including through the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the adoption of stronger Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on combatting terrorism. In the resolution recently adopted on the sixth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, it had been necessary to address the means for responding to the evolving nature of terrorism, but other problems also deserved attention, such as the nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism. Her delegation welcomed the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism initiated by Kazakhstan, which should serve the common goal of promoting regional and international cooperation in the struggle against terrorism.

74. Having been a victim of terrorism, her country condemned all terrorist acts and was resolutely committed to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. If, as some thought, terrorism weakened social structures and regional and world security, then that made better international cooperation all the more crucial. The United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States held in June 2018 was a practical response to that challenge, but smaller-scale security networks also needed to be built to facilitate rapid information-sharing.

75. Tunisia had consolidated its legal, institutional and operational framework for combating terrorism. Since the adoption in 2015 of a law on combating terrorism and money-laundering, both the definition of terrorist offences and investigation and intelligence-gathering methods had been strengthened. More resources had been given to the security services and information-sharing improved. A governmental decree passed in January 2018 had instituted procedures for carrying out measures adopted by the competent United Nations authorities with regard to the suppression of terrorist financing.

76. Her Government had always had a humanistic approach and attached a priority to understanding the root causes of radicalization and setting up the necessary mechanisms to address them.

77. **Mr. Mika** (Namibia) said that a terrorist attack on any country was an attack on all countries. Terrorism, irrespective of its origins or the form it took, went against the values that Namibia shared with the

international community. Namibia strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

78. Recognizing the importance of a coordinated global response to the ever-evolving global threat of terrorism, Namibia had recently adopted a number of legislative measures aimed at combatting and preventing international terrorism. They included a coherent and comprehensive law on financial intelligence, adopted in 2012, which had established a national centre responsible for collecting and analysing reports on suspicious transactions and activities that might relate to money-laundering or terrorist financing. Likewise, in 2012, a law had been passed on the safety of maritime navigation and the protection of airports and aircraft, which covered offences related to nuclear terrorism and the financing of terrorism. Continuing on the same trajectory, in September 2017, Namibia had launched e-border control management systems in order to effectively manage and mitigate the challenges associated with migration, which included, but were not limited to, cross-border crimes, trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and terrorism.

79. Namibia condemned all acts of terrorism but considered that it was important to distinguish between acts of terrorism and the acts of people fighting against colonial or foreign domination, given that the country had been denied the right to self-determination for many years while under the administration of the South African apartheid regime. Namibia looked forward to stronger cooperation at the regional and multilateral levels in order to effectively address international terrorism.

80. *Ms. Kremžar (Slovenia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

81. **Mr. Machida** (Japan) said that his Government strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and was deeply committed to countering that threat, which needed to be tackled through urgent and coordinated international efforts. Japan hoped to continue cooperating on effective counter-terrorism measures by providing human and financial resources to relevant organizations.

82. The threat of terrorism had been evolving and spreading globally. The importance of addressing the challenge posed by foreign terrorist fighters, including those that were returning and relocating, had been highlighted in the resolution adopted in June 2018 on the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and in Security Council resolution 2396 (2017). Pursuant to the latter resolution, Japan had been effectively using advance passenger information and passenger name records to detect and identify foreign terrorist fighters and terrorist networks. It would support efforts by the United Nations to provide technical assistance and capacity-building for such measures in other countries as well.

83. In addition to conventional counter-terrorism measures, efforts to prevent the violent extremism that was conducive to terrorism should be strengthened. Those efforts should cover areas such as education, economic development, employment and engagement with young people and women. It was necessary to collaborate with various actors, including international organizations, civil society, community leaders, non-governmental organizations and information technology companies. Japan had been providing financial support to United Nations projects related to the prevention of violent extremism, especially in Asia. As a responsible member of the international community, it would continue to cooperate closely with the United Nations on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism.

84. **Mr. Ghafoorzai** (Afghanistan) said that the global landscape remained precarious, with terrorism remaining a dark reality in both conflict and non-conflict settings. The tide of terror continued to rise in different countries and regions, including in South Asia and Afghanistan, which was among the countries most affected by that global threat.

85. In 2018, his country had been hit by a new wave of attacks aimed at reversing its progress towards stability. In response, the Afghan security forces had stood firm, defending the country against many terrorist groups and preventing them from capturing and controlling major sections of the territory. Terrorist groups, including ISIL, had suffered setbacks on the battlefield. They had accordingly increased their attacks on religious centres and civilian spaces as a means of fomenting sectarian and other divisions.

86. Terrorism was part of a network of regional and mutually reinforcing criminal activities. Sustained and constructive cooperation within and across regions was an imperative that must not be compromised. Afghanistan was engaged in bilateral, trilateral and other endeavours to tackle terrorism and other transnational threats, including the Afghan-led Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process and its counter-terrorism confidence-building measures. Afghanistan was also working to finalize a regional strategy to reinforce counter-terrorism efforts under that Process.

87. Afghanistan was amending and strengthening its domestic legislation to meet the evolving threat of terrorism and its obligations under international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols to which it

was a party. Its security and judicial institutions were apprehending and prosecuting those involved in terrorist attacks and repatriating foreign terrorist fighters to their countries of origin. It had also recently finalized its strategy to counter violent extremism and to reinforce the whole-of-society approach in combating extremist narratives. Religious figures and civic groups were expected to play a prominent role under the strategy, which was also focused on advancing new economic opportunities. Structural cooperation was currently under way with the Office of Counter-Terrorism to further align its legislation with international counter-terrorism instruments.

88. Afghanistan had always placed a high value on the role of the United Nations in strengthening the global response to terrorism. It hoped that the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy would lead to greater cooperation and more tangible results. Decisive action by States in denying any form of moral or material support or safe haven to terrorists was key to successful counter-terrorism measures. His Government also called for more efficient enforcement of Security Council sanction regimes in order to constrict the resources of terrorist groups and their ability to operate. It welcomed the fact that greater attention was now being given to supporting the rights of and providing assistance to victims of terrorism.

89. Afghanistan had sponsored resolution in which the General Assembly recognized 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism. In 2018, Islamic scholars from Afghanistan had joined other clerics in the Islamic world in denouncing violence in Afghanistan and in amplifying the call for lasting peace in that country. More could be done at regional and global levels to enhance interreligious and intercultural understanding in order to institute a global culture of peace.

90. Increased cooperation between counter-terrorism agencies of States was of vital importance so as to decrease and eventually defeat terrorism worldwide. His Government commended the Secretary-General for organizing the first-ever United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States in June 2018 and supported periodic follow-up discussions within such a framework to facilitate progress towards meeting commitments made. It also called for real, tangible progress towards concluding the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would reinforce broader international counter-terrorism efforts.

91. In conclusion, he reaffirmed his Government's abiding and longstanding commitment to combating and defeating international terrorism.

92. **Mr. Mostafa** (Iraq) said that his delegation reiterated its firm condemnat on of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and wherever it occurred. The phenomenon was constantly changing and threatened the universal quest for peace and security. In the heinous crimes of terrorists against public institutions and civilians, no distinction was made among faiths, religions or races. Iraq was among the countries most severely affected by terrorism and had fought against ISIL in the interests of the entire world. Terrorist acts were unjustified, whatever the underlying circumstances, reasons and aims.

93. His country had adopted measures to bring an end to that dangerous scourge, particularly by strengthening cooperation among countries at the regional and international level and by working under the auspices of the United Nations to punish the perpetrators of terrorist acts. Iraq had acceded to most of the international and regional instruments on countering terrorism. The Government was seeking to bolster its legal framework while respecting the rules of human rights. It had promulgated legislation on money-laundering and terrorism financing and the freezing the assets of terrorists.

94. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was now a reference for cooperation between the United Nations and Member States in anti-terrorism measures. It was crucial to implement the Strategy in a consistent, holistic manner. His delegation welcomed the United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States held in June 2018, which represented an opportunity to strengthen collective efforts to combat terrorism.

95. Iraq had experienced brutal attacks against its people, its land and its culture. Nevertheless, the Iraqi people had been able to inflict a crushing defeat upon the terrorists, with the help of the international coalition. However, despite the military victories against ISIL, that group was continuing to sow the seeds of destruction and death throughout the world in the name of Islam, posing a threat to international peace and security.

96. **Mr. Nguyen** Nam Duong (Viet Nam) said that his Government's consistent position was to condemn all acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of motivation. Perpetrators of terrorist acts must be severely punished. Viet Nam supported the counter-terrorism efforts of the international community undertaken on the basis of compliance with international

law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and through the codification and progressive development of international law, especially with the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

97. In order to eliminate terrorism, measures should be taken to address its root causes, including political, economic and social inequalities. All disputes should be resolved by peaceful means, in accordance with international law, while respecting diplomatic and legal processes, including procedures at international judicial institutions. Viet Nam had made important progress in improving its domestic legal system to ensure the prosecution and extradition of terrorist criminals and had accelerated the implementation of its national plan of action on the prevention of money-laundering and terrorist financing.

98. Viet Nam was a party to 14 multilateral treaties on counter-terrorism and had signed bilateral treaties with more than 40 countries on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and extradition. It had welcomed and actively participated in the first United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies held in June 2018. It had recently decided to accede to the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, an initiative of the Government of Kazakhstan. Like other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Viet Nam was implementing the organization's convention and plan of action on counter-terrorism. It was also working closely with ASEAN members in various regional mechanisms.

99. In implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, his country had once again reaffirmed its determination in the fight against terrorism. It stood ready to cooperate with other States and the international community in accordance with international law and the Charter in that endeavour.

100. **Ms. AlMatrooshi** (United Arab Emirates) said that all countries and all peoples faced extremist and terrorist threats, which became more complex as terrorist and extremist groups acquired and used advanced weapons and information technology to recruit thousands of fighters around the world and to finance and plan attacks remotely. Terrorist and extremist groups had become a tool in the implementation of the political agendas of rogue countries in order to undermine international stability and security. Although significant progress had been made against such groups, in particular in Iraq and Syria, more progress was still needed, especially in light of emerging challenges, including the return of foreign terrorist fighters and the appearance of new terrorist cells.

101. Given the global and intricate nature of terrorism and extremism, the response to them should be premised on two main elements. First, it should be global in nature, with the mobilization of resources and the promotion of cooperation, exchange of information and expertise among States, taking into account the special context of each State and region. Second, it should be comprehensive, addressing the root causes of terrorism and extremism. That meant combating recruitment and cutting off financing for terrorist groups, denying them territories and weapons and rehabilitating and reintegrating foreign terrorist fighters.

102. Her country had adopted a comprehensive approach to countering terrorism and extremism, addressing both the security and ideological aspects of the problem. It had acceded to more than 15 regional and international conventions and had set up a comprehensive legal framework to combat terrorist ideology and to criminalize incitement to violence, hatred and the desecration of religions. Current priorities in respect of counter-terrorism included promoting regional and international cooperation and exchange of information and expertise with all relevant parties; countering terrorist ideology, including by empowering women and young people, training religious leaders and promoting tolerance; and combating the use of the Internet and other technologies by terrorist and extremist groups.

103. Her country called on Member States to renew their commitment to international law and the Charter of the United Nations in order to hold to account countries that violated the norms and rules underpinning the international order, especially those that supported and financed terrorist groups.

104. **Mr. Salah** (Libya) said that terrorism, which should not be associated with any religion, belief or culture, had continued to spread and was now a grave challenge for all States – small, large, rich or poor. The fight against terrorism required a joint commitment from the international community. Counter-terrorism efforts at the international level would never be complete and would only be limited in scope without proper coordination. His country firmly condemned terrorism in all its forms, regardless of the causes or motivations. It complied with all relevant international instruments, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It welcomed the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, initiated by Kazakhstan.

105. Libya had faced and continued to face terrorist groups, including foreign terrorist fighters, who had been able to infiltrate the different regions of the country, exploiting political and security instability to perpetrate terrorist acts. His Government had confronted terrorism using all the means at its disposal and by making great sacrifices which had resulted in victories over the terrorist groups. However, terrorism remained a transborder issue. That was why his country had participated in ministerial meetings in neighbouring countries on border security and surveillance, resulting in a plan of action which, it hoped, would be supported by the international community.

106. Irregular migration was a human tragedy and a source of suffering, not only for migrants but also for transit countries, including Libya, which was facing economic, social and security repercussions on a grand scale. Some of the migrants had been found to have been involved in terrorist networks and had already committed murder, bombings and other attacks against innocent civilians. All countries of origin of such migrants should therefore police their borders and strive to ensure that migration was regular and orderly, with respect for State sovereignty and territorial integrity. The international community should also support development within such countries and assist them in addressing the challenges affecting the daily lives of their citizens.

107. There was no alternative to strengthening international cooperation to tackle terrorist networks. Strong political determination that could guarantee the fulfilment of all commitments under the relevant international instruments was needed. Addressing the dangers and risks of terrorism meant addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism, including protracted conflict and absence of the rule of law, violations of human rights, discrimination, exclusion and social and economic marginalization.

108. The Security Council should assume its responsibility to punish those involved in terrorist attacks, invoking Chapter VII of the Charter if necessary. The capacities of all States to tackle the terrorist threat and bring to justice the perpetrators of terrorist attacks must be strengthened. Lastly, sustainable development in developing countries must be facilitated by eradicating unemployment and improving the service and production sectors. The composition of terrorist bodies and their aims and sources of funding, as well as the role of foreign terrorist fighters within such organizations must be scrutinized.

109. **Mr. Phonekeo** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that acts of terrorism not only led to the loss of life and injury but also impeded the social and economic development of nations and created a climate of fear and injustice in societies. His Government condemned all acts of terrorism. As a peace-loving nation, the Lao People's Democratic Republic made every effort to prevent and suppress the common threat of terrorism. It was a party to most of the international conventions on counter-terrorism and was taking action to fulfil its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions. At the regional level, it was working closely with the ASEAN member countries; it was a party to the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism and had signed on to various joint declarations on combating international terrorism. At the national level, it was cooperating with the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Office of Counter-Terrorism in conducting workshops and seminars to promote awareness among the population and among government sectors of international counter-terrorism efforts.

110. **Mr. Hidug** (Ethiopia) said that terrorism posed a growing challenge to peace and security and no country could claim to be immune from terrorist threats. The fight against terrorism accordingly required a globally coordinated response, and the need for enhanced cooperation among regional and international organizations could not be overemphasized. Terrorism was a complex and ever-changing phenomenon in terms of its motivation, financing and support mechanisms, methods of attack and choice of targets. There was therefore a need for frequent revisions of national and international counter-terrorism strategies and instruments.

111. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy provided a framework for enhancing national, regional and international counter-terrorism efforts. While the primary responsibility for implementing the Strategy rested with Member States, international, regional and subregional mechanisms should continue to play a vital role in promoting counter-terrorism cooperation. The Security Council counter-terrorism architecture, which included the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate, was an important global framework for combating terrorism and violent extremism. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Ethiopia worked closely with that Committee and Executive Directorate and other United Nations entities on counter-terrorism issues. Despite the significant progress made through those and other frameworks, international cooperation to address the threat of terrorism was still not fully effective and terrorists continued to pose serious threats to international peace and security.

112. The fight against terrorism must primarily be focused on its root causes, and the response of the international community had to be long-term and multi-pronged, addressing various conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Particular attention had to be devoted to dissuading elements in society that were bent on fomenting hatred and hostility from exploiting disadvantaged segments of the population to engage in violence and carry out acts of terrorism. Instead, it was necessary for the international community to work hard to promote mutual tolerance, co-existence and respect for each other's sensitivities.

113. In that connection, the legal frameworks at various levels should be supplemented by a culture of dialogue, understanding, tolerance, consultation and cooperation. It was crucial to combat the social exclusion of groups and individuals by ensuring that their values were respected and that they had equal opportunities in society. Governments, faith-based institutions, civil society and other stakeholders should be encouraged to inculcate members of society, particularly young people, with the values of cultural tolerance, inter-cultural dialogue and the rule of law. It was also important to work towards ensuring economic and social security and the advancement of citizens.

114. Collective action was the key to combating terrorism. In that regard, the Ethiopian Government had ratified 9 of the 19 international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols that obliged parties to penalize the perpetrators of offences defined in such instruments, and had also ratified a number of regional counter-terrorism instruments. It had enacted domestic laws against money-laundering and terrorism and provided training to law enforcement and other concerned officials on the laws aimed at combating terrorism. The Government had also undertaken major reforms to foster socioeconomic development, expand the political space and ensure the rule of law, media freedom and respect for human rights.

115. In conclusion, he reiterated his country's support for the convening of an international summit under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including identifying its root causes, and called for the finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

United Nations A/C.6/73/SR.5

General Assembly
Seventy-third session

Official Records

Distr.: General
14 December 2018

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 5th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 5 October 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair:	Mr. Luna (Vice-Chair)	(Brazil)
later:	Mr. Biang (Chair)	(Gabon)
later:	Mr. Luna (Vice-Chair)	(Brazil)

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18-16572 (E)

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In the absence of Mr. Biang (Gabon), Mr. Luna (Brazil), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 111: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/73/125)

1. **Mr. Dotta** (Uruguay) said that his Government was committed to defending international law, the rule of law, human rights, international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and it condemned terrorist acts in all their forms, regardless of the methods used or the political, ideological, philosophical, religious, ethnic, racial or other motivations, and by whomever committed. Today more than ever, the international community must join forces to address those abominable acts which endanger the very existence of the international community. Terrorism was the worst scourge and the worst proof of the failure to respect global values and principles and must be addressed comprehensively, with the participation of all States. In that connection, it was particularly important to combat the financing of terrorism and the sale and supply of weapons to terrorist groups.

2. It was regrettable that, despite numerous Security Council resolutions condemning acts of terrorism, and notwithstanding years of negotiations, it had not been possible to arrive at a consensus on a definition of terrorism; the Sixth Committee was the ideal venue to do so and to elaborate a draft convention on the subject. Political arguments must not be allowed to undermine such efforts. For its part, Uruguay had signed the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism initiated by Kazakhstan.

3. His delegation urged all States to cooperate sincerely to craft a binding instrument in which terrorism was defined and the methods of combating it were spelled out. However, terrorism could not be combated using instruments alone. The promotion of education, culture and values, and the elimination of the inequality and fanaticism which cause people to decide to join terrorist groups as an alternative lifestyle could also contribute to the fight against terrorism.

4. **Mr. Oña Garcés** (Ecuador) said that terrorism was a serious threat to the international community. Ecuador unequivocally condemned all terrorist acts committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, regardless of the entity that perpetrated them. Joint, concerted measures were needed to counteract terrorism; any such action must be consistent with human rights and State sovereignty. In that connection, Ecuador reiterated its support for a balanced application of all four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and also for the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

5. The prevention of terrorism was just as important as its repression, and it was therefore essential to identify factors that might promote acts of terrorism, including its financing, political, ethnic, religious and racial intolerance, and social and economic inequality between nations. In early 2018, Ecuador had been the scene of a number of violent acts perpetrated by irregular armed groups linked to international organized crime, resulting in a dozen deaths, numerous injuries, population displacement and damage to national infrastructure. In response, his Government had set up a national committee for border security and had implemented a plan for the defence of the northern border to address the threat of transnational terrorism in all its forms.

6. The United Nations was the sole global platform from which terrorism could be combated effectively. In that connection, his delegation supported efforts to draft a framework convention on international terrorism. To reach a consensus, it was important to consider all points of view and incorporate the legitimate concerns of all Member States. His delegation was in favour of an open consultation process to achieve progress in that regard.

7. *Mr. Biang (Gabon) took the Chair.*

8. **Ms. Gebremedhin** (Eritrea), reiterating her Government's unequivocal condemnation of violent extremism and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, said that any action taken to combat terrorism must be consistent with international law. Acts of terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

9. The crisis in the Red Sea Basin and the potential spread of terrorism and violent extremism to the rest of the region was a matter of serious concern. Eritrea, while stable, secure and harmonious, had long experience in fighting radicalization, extremism and terrorism, and it had committed itself at national, regional and international levels to the global effort to combat and eliminate terrorism.

10. Eritrea was currently developing overarching projects with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to build the human, infrastructural, technical and technological capacities of the Eritrean law enforcement agencies. Those projects were based on national ownership and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the Regional Programme for Eastern Africa

(2016–2021) "Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in Eastern Africa" of UNODC.

11. Regional peace and security was key to combating terrorism and violent extremism. On 9 July 2018 Eritrea and Ethiopia had signed the Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship, ending 20 years of hostilities. The recent renewal of peace and cooperation in the Horn of Africa was paving the way for peace, stability and economic development among all the countries of the region. In a peace agreement signed in Jeddah, both countries had reaffirmed their commitment to combat terrorism and trafficking in persons, arms and drugs, in accordance with international covenants and conventions. They also encouraged cooperation on counter-terrorism efforts between the countries of the region.

12. A balanced implementation of all four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was central to combating terrorism. In that connection, Eritrea had signed the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, initiated by Kazakhstan, and it had sponsored and welcomed Security Council resolution 2396 (2017) on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

13. The Horn of Africa, where Eritrea was located, was very vulnerable to the threat of terrorist infiltration, hence the need to strengthen cooperation and enhance the capability of States and regional and international organizations to combat that threat. In that connection, the unjustified restrictions imposed on some States must be lifted, because they could undermine their ability to fight terrorism. The root causes of terrorism, such as prolonged unresolved conflicts, poverty, social marginalization and a sense of injustice, must also be addressed.

14. **Mr. Nasimfar** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that terrorism had become more diffuse and pervasive and terrorists were making increasing use of information and communications technologies. Although Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) had been defeated in Iraq and Syria, its ideology would not simply fade away. The Takfiri ideology used by terrorists from Al-Qaida to ISIL to craft distorted narratives based on the misinterpretation and misrepresentation of Islam to justify violence could not be eliminated solely through military, political or economic means. Any effective strategy must contain a major cultural and ideological component.

15. There was a need for a comprehensive plan and close cooperation and coordination between relevant stakeholders to eradicate terrorism. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy provided such a common platform for cooperation, and his Government supported its implementation in an integrated and balanced manner. Besides, applying double standards and giving a one-sided interpretation of the notion of "terrorism" simply enabled terrorist groups and their affiliates to freely grow, recruit new members and perpetrate unspeakable atrocities.

16. Another longstanding issue concerned foreign invasions and occupations and their consequences, the most pressing example being the 70-year occupation of Palestine, a situation which had been further compounded by systematic political and military foreign interventions in the region.

17. The Islamic Republic of Iran had been and continued to be a victim of terrorism. In 2017, terrorists affiliated with ISIL had carried out twin attacks in Tehran. Several innocent persons had been killed and dozens injured. On 22 September 2018, a terrorist attack had been perpetrated in Ahvaz, a south-western city of the country; at least 24 persons, including children, had been killed and 60 others injured. Such indiscriminate attacks not only left untouched the will of the Islamic Republic of Iran to fight vigorously all manifestations of terrorism, but also rendered that nation more firmly resolved to contribute to the fight against terrorism.

18. The Islamic Republic of Iran had taken effective legal measures to strengthen its national capabilities to suppress terrorism. For example, the National Strategy for Countering Terrorist Acts had been adopted in 2013 and the Countering Financing Terrorism Act had been adopted in 2016. That Act, which criminalized all acts related to the financing of terrorism, was compatible with the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. A new draft amendment to the Act, aimed at filling gaps in existing law, had been adopted in early July 2018.

19. As part of its contribution to the international fight against terrorism, the Government had signed the bill of accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and had submitted it to the Parliament for consideration. The Islamic Republic of Iran had also signed mutual legal assistance agreements and memorandums of understanding with more than 40 countries in which the freezing of crime-related funds and assets had been addressed. All those bilateral agreements made provision for judicial cooperation, exchange of information and coordination to deal with terrorist crimes.

20. Bearing in mind the importance of training, capacity-building and technical assistance, the Islamic Republic of Iran had been cooperating with UNODC on

deliverables and activities relating to the fight against terrorism and money-laundering. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. In that connection, there was an urgent need to improve the efficiency of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, including through the adoption of its terms of reference in the General Assembly. To enhance the involvement of Member States in the work of the Centre, the members of its Advisory Board must be elected by the General Assembly, and the meetings of the Advisory Board must be open to all Member States.

21. Lastly, the fight against terrorism must be conducted in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. His delegation strongly rejected the labelling of certain States for political purposes and the unilateral preparation of lists accusing other States of supposedly sponsoring terrorism. Such unilateral acts would only undermine urgently required joint efforts by all States to counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

22. **Mr. Mikeladze** (Georgia) said that his country strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose. As ISIL had experienced significant losses in Syria and Iraq, it had expanded its global network and had begun regrouping based on geographical proximity and a concentration in smaller groups in other countries, especially those affected by conflict. To counter that development, it was of vital importance to strengthen international cooperation and maintain an intensive and timely exchange of information between national law enforcement agencies.

23. Georgia had enhanced its counter-terrorism legislation by criminalizing terrorist activities, including those carried out by foreign fighters, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) and other relevant international instruments. The strengthening of the legal framework had resulted in effective enforcement measures to prosecute perpetrators implicated in international terrorism. Fighters who had returned to Georgia had been indicted for their participation in the activities of ISIL.

24. His Government welcomed the visit of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate to Georgia from 16 to 18 July 2018 for the purpose of promoting dialogue between Georgia and the United Nations and monitoring the country's implementation of the relevant resolutions. His delegation looked forward to the Directorate's final report; its recommendations would contribute to the effectiveness of the country's security system.

25. Georgia had sponsored General Assembly resolution 71/248 on the establishment of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. It had also accepted hundreds of asylum seekers from the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq who were fleeing the violence of ISIL, which was impressive considering that 20 per cent of Georgia remained under occupation and the country was home to hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons.

26. **Mr. Millogo** (Burkina Faso) said that terrorism had had negative consequences for the socioeconomic development of his country. His Government had undertaken a number of legal and institutional reforms aimed at preventing and suppressing terrorism while ensuring respect for human rights. They included the adoption of a new counter-terrorism law and the establishment and strengthening of specialized judicial and law enforcement services.

27. Transboundary judicial and security-related cooperation was an effective way of combating the terrorist threat. There was a close link between terrorism, transnational organized crime and trafficking in persons. The sources of financing for such activities must be cut. The international community must also give close attention to the problem of foreign fighters, whose movements might well destabilize entire regions, especially those that did not have the capacity to respond to the threat. Accordingly, Burkina Faso had played an active role in the establishment of the Group of Five for the Sahel and its joint force, which unfortunately had yet to be deployed. His delegation called for bilateral and multilateral support for the joint force to ensure that it had the resources needed to meet its objectives.

28. His delegation looked forward with a sense of urgency to the finalization and adoption of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. In that connection, it welcomed Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, which Burkina Faso had signed recently. In the fight against terrorism, the emphasis must be placed on prevention and on addressing the root causes, namely poverty, discrimination in various forms and population displacement due to conflicts and climate change. Greater efforts must be made to involve all social groups in the fight against violent extremism and radicalization.

29. **Mr. Nyanid** (Cameroon) said that a concerted, coordinated effort was needed to address terrorism, which constituted a grave threat to international peace and security. To that end, an exchange of information and a strengthening of State capacities were essential. His Government welcomed the holding on 28 and 29 June 2018 of the first United Nations High-level Conference on Counter-Terrorism. The joint summit on counter-terrorism between the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States held in Lomé had demonstrated the growing awareness of African States of the need for countries to adapt to the evolving tactics of terrorists. Terrorist groups had shifted their focus to the cyberspace; that called for heightened vigilance and an appropriate response. International cooperation in that regard was an absolute priority, and the success of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy would depend on consistent action by the structures set up in that context.

30. Cameroon, which had been the scene of repeated atrocities committed by Boko Haram, firmly condemned terrorism and reaffirmed its strong commitment to the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The fight against terrorism called for a combination of factors, including heightened awareness and the involvement of local communities and the participation of non-governmental organizations in the elaboration of strategies adapted to local situations in order to deconstruct the extremist narrative and ensure that young people and other vulnerable persons were not misled by the illusions propagated by terrorists.

31. In Cameroon, which encouraged a culture of peace and tolerance and an interfaith dialogue, numerous educational programmes and development projects involving young people were under way to counteract the terrorist narrative of hate and to deradicalize persons attracted by it. Violent extremism and terrorism were mutually reinforcing, and in that connection, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

32. The successes of Cameroon in combating Boko Haram were the result of the synergy between the States of its subregion. That cooperation, which included the establishment of a mixed multilateral force, should be strengthened and made permanent. Measures aimed at destroying terrorist ideologies should be given priority in counter-terrorism policies.

33. **Mr. Al-Rumaihi** (Bahrain) said that his Government was convinced of the need for a comprehensive approach to counter and eliminate terrorism. Terrorism was no longer confined to easily identifiable groups. It had taken many forms and manifestations and had become a tool used by some States to instigate crises in other States and thus destabilize and undermine international peace and security. Aware of those threats, Bahrain was committed to the operationalization of all cooperation frameworks with partners and friends in the region and further afield. It also participated in a number of coalitions, including the Islamic Military Counter-Terrorism Coalition, the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL and the Arab Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen.

34. At the national level, Bahrain had adopted several acts and regulations on countering terrorism, such as Act No. 58 (2006) on the protection of society from terrorist acts and the amendments thereto, which included a section on terrorist crimes and established the post of special prosecutor for terrorist matters, and Decree No. 4 (2001) on the prohibition of money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In 2001, a committee had been established to elaborate policies on prohibiting and combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In 2014 Bahrain had hosted an international conference on countering the financing of terrorism. In implementation of the outcomes of that conference, a workshop had been held in 2015 on the protection of civil society organizations from the threat of terrorism and possible means of addressing the phenomenon without undermining the activities of those bodies. It had also taken part in the international conference on combating the financing of terrorism under the theme "no money for terror" organized by the OECD in Paris in April 2018. Bahrain also actively participated in the communications working group established within the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

35. Bahrain reiterated its rejection of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

36. **Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia) said that his country was committed to applying the principles of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of friendly relations and cooperation among States. It condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It would continue to fulfil its obligations under international law by supporting all counter-terrorism measures adopted by relevant regional groups, mechanisms and the international community that were consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and soon, it hoped, with a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

37. Zambia had adopted legislation to prevent and prohibit the financing of terrorism and proliferation activities and contained measures for their detection.

His Government also intended to domesticate all international conventions and treaties on anti-terrorism and proliferation. It had been actively pursuing a five-year process of transformation of its national development programme to ensure that its counter-terrorism strategy was well coordinated and integrated into all sectors of the economy.

38. Although awareness of activities linked to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism was growing, Zambia had yet to make significant progress in terms of convictions and forfeiture of assets. His Government was therefore seeking to ensure the involvement of all public agencies and communities in the prevention of financial crimes. Zambia was grateful for the technical support it had received from cooperating partners.

39. There was a need for the international community to combine efforts to deal decisively with the scourge of terrorism and to provide technical support to developing countries to enhance and strengthen their institutions dealing with terrorism. It was also important to ensure a proper balance between new, stricter laws for combating terrorism and the basic rights and freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

40. **Archbishop Auza** (Observer for the Holy See) said that the Holy See unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as no ideological, political, philosophical, racial, ethnic or religious reasons could justify or excuse the resort to terrorist acts. Indeed, terrorist acts violated human dignity, human rights and international humanitarian law; endangered the stability and cohesion of society; jeopardized human development and threatened international peace and security. Consequently, effective measures must be adopted by all to prevent the recruiting, training and financing of potential terrorists as well as the commission of terrorist acts. Particular attention must be given to preventing the radicalization of young people through the media and cybertechnologies. Since terrorism was a crime, it must be fought taking full advantage of the mechanisms of criminal law and international mutual assistance among police and judicial authorities. Security or military means were never sufficient to combat terrorism and were rarely appropriate.

41. The United Nations could play a key role in assisting Member States in preventing terrorist activities before they became threats to international peace and security. The counter-terrorism conventions adopted by the Sixth Committee to ensure international judicial cooperation were of particular importance. The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism was also uniquely placed to provide strategic leadership and centralized coordination so that States could focus their resources in regions where counter-terrorism efforts were most need.

42. In implementing measures to combat terrorism, the authorities must scrupulously respect human rights, international humanitarian law and due process. While it was critical to ensure that wrongdoers were held accountable for their actions, the rule of law must be preserved at all cost. The fight against terrorism could not justify policies or measures that sacrificed due process and human dignity in the name of security, nor could it justify discriminatory or repressive measures against ethnic or religious minorities. Only by respecting the fundamental principles of justice would it be possible to gain the trust of those communities where terror organizations were pervasive. An arbitrary application of repressive measures, a selective approach to human rights and a brazen disregard for cultures and religions – especially if such action was perceived to be blatant demonstrations of superiority or deliberate acts of provocation – would not win hearts and minds.

43. Moreover, there could be no conflict between the effective implementation of measures to counteract terrorism and the provision of humanitarian assistance. On the contrary, as recognized by the Financial Action Task Force, legitimate humanitarian activities by charitable organizations, including religiously inspired organizations, contributed to the prevention of terrorism. There was hence the need to ensure that counter-terrorism measures did not limit nor inhibit the capacity of non-governmental and charitable organizations to provide humanitarian aid to vulnerable groups or persons, such as emergency relief to refugees and displaced persons, and medical services to the wounded.

44. Human development was key to preventing terrorism in the long term. States must work together with local authorities, civil society and international organizations to promote development, protect human rights and prevent the spread of ideologies that fostered terrorism. Local governments and grassroots organizations could play an essential role in supporting strategies that kept young people from being radicalized by terrorist propaganda. However, while human and economic development were indispensable to prevent terrorism, even fully developed societies might be susceptible to terrorism if terrorist propaganda and indoctrination were readily available online. Heightened international solidarity and a coordinated response were needed to deny terrorist organizations access to the cybertechnologies used in their recruitment and radicalization efforts.

45. Tolerance and dialogue among civilizations and the enhancement of interfaith and intercultural understanding were also conducive to the prevention of terrorism. Everyone must be able to worship freely and openly. Religious leaders must encourage social cohesion and dialogue and must take the lead in rejecting the narratives and ideologies that engendered radicalization, hatred and extremism.

46. The Holy See was deeply committed to promoting dialogue among religions and cultures with a view to creating a more peaceful society. To deter violence in civil society, it was also indispensable to foster the expression of dissent and grievances through democratic channels. Respect for the rights of free assembly and freedom of speech were vital to defeat extremism. The Holy See encouraged the Sixth Committee to continue its efforts to conclude a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and to pursue negotiations on the possibility of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. The conclusion of such a convention would restore the General Assembly to its rightful place in the development of universally agreed counter-terrorism norms.

47. **Mr. Harland** (Observer for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) said that the ICRC was deeply distressed by the devastating impact of acts of terrorism on communities and individuals. ICRC did not challenge the legitimacy of States to take the measures necessary to ensure their security and eliminate terrorism, but international law, and in particular international humanitarian law and human rights law, must be respected when individuals were arrested and detained in connection with terrorism. The designation of such individuals as "foreign terrorist fighters" or the nature of the acts they might have committed must in no way be invoked as a justification for the non-observance of the legal protections to which they were entitled. Independent and neutral monitoring mechanisms, such as the ICRC, should be granted access to such persons so that they could assist detaining authorities in ensuring that detainees were treated humanely and in conformity with applicable international law and standards.

48. In relation to the counter-terrorism measures taken against "foreign fighters" and their families, ICRC was particularly concerned about the situation of children affected by such measures who, even when accused of crimes, were first and foremost victims. They must be detained only as a last resort, and they must be treated with due consideration for their age and individual vulnerabilities. ICRC encouraged States to find solutions that were in the best interests of such children, notably by ensuring that they were not separated from their parents and siblings.

49. It had repeatedly underscored the potential adverse effects on humanitarian action of certain counter-terrorism measures taken by States, both internationally and domestically. The activities of impartial humanitarian organizations, including those undertaken on behalf of wounded and sick fighters, must never be considered as a form of unlawful support of non-State actors or persons designated as terrorists or criminalized under international, regional or domestic laws. Such activities were an integral part of the mandate assigned to impartial humanitarian organizations by the State parties to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their 1977 Additional Protocols.

50. Sanctions regimes and criminal laws dealing with terrorism should exclude from their scope of application activities that were exclusively humanitarian and impartial. Such exclusions would be in line with the letter and spirit of international humanitarian law and would be compatible with States' obligations in that regard. Failure to exclude those activities from criminal laws dealing with terrorism would lead to the negation of the notion of neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian action and jeopardize the mission of impartial humanitarian organizations to protect and assist persons affected by armed conflict, particularly in areas where non-State armed groups designated as terrorist groups were active.

51. In that connection, ICRC welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/284 on the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, notably paragraph 79, in which the Assembly urged States "to ensure, in accordance with their obligations under international law and national regulations, and whenever international humanitarian law is applicable, that counter-terrorism legislation and measures do not impede humanitarian and medical activities or engagement with all relevant actors as foreseen by international humanitarian law". The time had come to take concrete measures to that effect.

Agenda item 91: Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework (A/73/141 and A/72/86)

52. **The Chair** drew attention to the request by Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Italy and Singapore for the inclusion of the item in the provisional agenda of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly (A/73/141) and the report of the Secretary-General on the review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations (A/72/86).

53. **Mr. Giacomelli da Silva** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Italy and Singapore, said that the request to have that item included in the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly had been submitted in order to create a dedicated platform for a long overdue review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations. Adopted by the General Assembly in 1946 and amended only three times – in 1949, 1950 and 1978 – the regulations had been rendered out of date owing to the evolution of practice and technology. A review of those regulations would ensure that they were useful and relevant to Member States, as stressed by the General Assembly in 2017, and that would in turn promote the fulfilment of the obligation set out in Article 102.

54. On average, the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs registered 1,300 treaties per year, as well as almost double that amount of treaty actions, with the result that over 70,000 treaties and more than 125,000 treaty actions had been registered since 1945. Statistics also showed that treaty registration was not yet universal and appeared to be geographically imbalanced. As a result, a significant number of treaties had not been registered.

55. At its seventieth session, under a different agenda item, the General Assembly had invited the Secretary-General to review the regulations and submit the result of the review to the Sixth Committee. The Secretary-General had provided the results of that review in his report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities (A/71/169). At the seventy-first session, the Sixth Committee had not had time to consider the Secretary-General's recommendations in detail but had requested him to further elaborate on the review and to submit a report accordingly.

56. In the report submitted pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General had outlined the historical background of the regulations and included seven areas for consideration by the General Assembly. The Secretary-General had also discussed possible means of increasing the efficiency of the registration and publication process and enhancing the role played by the Treaty Section in supporting Member States in that area. At the seventy-second session, during its debate under a different agenda item, the Sixth Committee had not had time – yet again – to consider the issue in depth, but the General Assembly had stressed that the regulations should be useful and relevant to Member States.

57. The short-term objective under the current agenda item was to conclude a review of the regulations in 2018. That exercise could serve to clarify and simplify the procedural requirements for registration; to facilitate the further use of electronic resources in the registration process; to enhance efficiency; to consider whether the current publication policy met the needs of Member States; and to modernize the methods for disseminating information on registered treaties. To facilitate the review, a draft resolution would be circulated, containing proposed updates to the regulations in an annex, to serve as the basis for informal consultations.

58. The debate under the agenda item could also trigger an exchange of views among Member States regarding their treaty-making practice and serve as a platform for the identification of trends and the sharing of best practices in treaty-making. If members so desired, in future sessions the item could also provide a space for discussion on other treaty law-related topics, such as the *Summary of Practice of the Secretary-General as Depositary of Multilateral Treaties*.

59. The inclusion of the current agenda item marked the first time since 2009 that a new item had been included on the agenda of the Sixth Committee at the request of Member States. It would provide an opportunity for the revitalization of the work of the Sixth Committee. Through constructive and focused dialogue, the General Assembly should be able to conclude its review of the regulations in 2018.

60. **Ms. Rivera Sánchez** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the Sixth Committee contributed to the revitalization of its work. CELAC welcomed the opportunity to have a dedicated debate on the review of the regulations for the registration of treaties under Article 102 of the Charter. As noted by the Secretary-General in his report on the review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations (A/72/86), there was a geographical imbalance in the registration of treaties. Simplifying the procedure for registering treaties and increasing the use of electronic resources could go a long way towards overcoming the current shortcomings in treaty registration. The practices for the publication of treaties, including those pertaining to the dissemination of information on registered treaties, could be modernized, while balancing the calls for the reduction of the current backlog in the publication of the *Treaty Series* with the need to respect multilingualism, which was a core value of the Organization.

61. Promoting multilingualism entailed the active involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, and the countries of CELAC therefore reiterated the request

to the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to ensure full parity among the six official languages. They pledged to work constructively during the informal consultations under the item in order to conclude the long-overdue review of the regulations during the current session. They were open to discuss other treaty-related issues that could be addressed under the agenda item in future sessions, such as the role of the Secretary-General as a depositary of multilateral treaties.

62. **Ms. Gauci** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and Serbia; the stabilization and association process country and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova, said that, like the Charter of the United Nations, the Treaty on European Union had established the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law as both a founding principle of the European Union and a key objective for the external action of the European Union. In particular, it provided that the European Union contributed to the strict observance and development of international law.

63. The European Union was a contracting party to a large number of bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements. Together with its member States, it had shaped treaty law and practice in a significant manner and thus considered the current agenda item important. The regulations that underpinned Article 102 of the Charter had an important purpose in reaffirming and promoting the appropriate registration and publication of treaties and international agreements.

64. A review to update the current regulations to reflect the evolution of practice and modern technological developments, clarify and simplify the procedural requirements for registration and facilitate further use of electronic resources in the process was welcome. The review would also help improve the dissemination of information on registered treaties and international agreements. Through a discussion and exchange of best practices, the review would make the publication of the *Treaty Series* more efficient and enhance transparency. It could also help in identifying areas where a better use of resources could be secured. It would reinforce the usefulness of the regulations for all parties to treaties and international agreements and better meet their needs, resulting in a broader implementation of Article 102.

65. For the European Union and its member States, a review of the regulations would be a timely step in support of the international legal order and the rule of law.

66. **Ms. Onanga** (Gabon) said that the subject matter of the current agenda item was reflected in her Government's commitment to promoting respect for the Charter and the formation and consolidation of international law. Although in principle all States had equal rights and obligations under international law, they did not all have the same capacity to adhere to the framework established by international law. The current item, which was intended to promote the registration of treaties in order to ensure optimal and equal adherence, was thus salutary.

67. Gabon supported the efforts of the Treaty Section to modernize existing tools and States now had the knowledge and expertise needed to democratize and disseminate them. It was indeed time to initiate a new review that took account of recent technological developments in order to adapt the existing mechanism, which had been in operation for decades, to current needs.

68. A multilateral mechanism was of vital importance to assist less well-off countries in promoting international law while protecting their national interests. International cooperation was needed to reduce the gap between countries and ensure that all States participated more equitably in the strengthening and promotion of the treaty framework. To that end, greater support for the Office of Legal Affairs, including in terms of budgetary allocations by the General Assembly, was indispensable. The countries which had initiated the agenda item should consider taking up the issue in the Fifth Committee for a concrete discussion.

69. **Mr. Rittener** (Switzerland) said that his Government welcomed the initiative to place the question of strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework on the agenda of the Sixth Committee. It strongly supported holding a discussion on revising the regulations concerning Article 102 of the Charter. All the measures proposed by the Secretary-General in his report on the review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations (A/72/86) warranted close attention, in particular the: the simplification of the procedure for States to register a treaty; the role of the depositary; and the use of electronic resources.

70. Switzerland had become a member of the United Nations in 2002 and since then had endeavoured to transfer to the Secretariat all the treaties and international agreements that it had concluded. The Secretary-General should envisage a more streamlined registration procedure, one that would enable a relatively new Member State like Switzerland to catch up with the registration of its unregistered treaties. A

corresponding adaptation of the regulations would also facilitate the fulfilment of the conditions stipulated in Article 102 by Switzerland also with regard to treaties concluded before it became a State Member of the United Nations.

71. Switzerland attached great importance to the role of the depositaries of international treaties. It had broad experience in that area and was currently the depositary of some 80 treaties, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols. It had acted in an impartial and neutral manner by maintaining the distinction between its role as depositary and that of party to the Conventions. Switzerland welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal which clearly defined the role of all the depositaries in ensuring the registration of multilateral treaties. Since the adoption in 1946 of the regulations giving effect to Article 102 of the Charter, it had endeavoured to register all the treaties of which it was the depositary.

72. Lastly, Switzerland encouraged the use of information technologies to achieve the objectives set out in Article 102. It supported the proposal to modify article 9 of the regulations so as to facilitate the use of electronic resources in the registration process.

73. *Mr. Luna (Brazil), Vice-Chair, resumed the Chair.*

74. **Mr.** Elsadig Ali Sayed **Ahmed** (Sudan) said it was important to recognize that the regulations regarding the registration of treaties, which had been last updated in 1978, were obsolete, given practice and modern technologies. Moreover, there was a clear geographical imbalance regarding the registration of treaties. He hoped that the inclusion of the current item on the agenda would indeed help create to a platform for a review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter, as stipulated in paragraph 8(b) of General Assembly resolution 70/118. He also hoped that the review would provide an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of the registration and publication of treaties and encourage countries to register their treaties; to review the objective conditions for their registration; and to recognize the role of the depositary, whether it was the Secretary-General or any other depositary, in a manner that would reflect the current practice of the Secretariat as well as relevant provisions of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

75. The use of electronic means would appear to be the best way to register treaties. However, as developing countries continued to have difficulty accessing such technologies, there was a need to provide them with the necessary technical assistance.

76. The conclusion of treaties was an expression of sovereignty. The contracting parties to a treaty had an obligation, not a choice, to apply the treaty. The parties did not require any authorization if there was no international authority that was superior to the authority of the States concerned. Under treaty law, international treaties were enforceable only among the parties thereto, which assumed rights and obligations under the said treaties. As set out in article 26 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, every treaty in force was binding upon the parties to it and must be performed by them in good faith.

77. In conclusion, his delegation welcomed the inclusion of the current item on the agenda of the General Assembly. It hoped that the Treaty Section would continue its efforts to promote capacity-building and provide support to Member States. It also hoped that the General Assembly would take the necessary measures to address the gaps in the registration of treaties by promoting capacity-building and issuing technical assistance guides, and that the main rules pertaining to treaties would be respected.

78. **Mr. Racovita** (Romania) said that for his Government, the concern of the Secretary-General and Member States to improve and simplify the treaty regulations was of great interest. Romania had always been open to making the international treaty framework more transparent and accessible. It agreed with the General Assembly that the regulations should be both useful and relevant to the Member States. Considering that they had not been updated since 1978 and given technological developments, Romania supported the initiative of an electronic platform for the registration and publication of treaties.

79. Such a platform would establish a balance between the Secretary-General's depositary functions and the promotion and the publication of treaties, on the one hand, and the need for Member States to have easy access to services and information available on international treaties, on the other hand. His delegation was confident that the Sixth Committee would consider any recommendations put forward and its discussions would create the foundation for the establishment of a new, updated and, most importantly, user-friendly e-platform.

80. **Mr. Simcock** (United States of America) said that treaties provided an important means by which States could establish frameworks to advance their common interests. The United States worked actively to identify areas in which treaty relationships could enhance its cooperative efforts. It utilized treaties to enhance law enforcement cooperation to fight crime and protect its

citizens, promote mutually beneficial terms for international trade and coordinate efforts for mutual defence and security. In 2018, the United States Senate had provided advice and consent for the ratification of five new treaties addressing extradition, maritime boundaries and intellectual property rules. The United States looked forward to continued engagement with other States to make its treaty relationships effective and mutually beneficial.

81. His delegation had taken note of ideas for potential changes to regulations under Article 102 of the Charter regarding the registration of treaties. As it had noted when the Secretary-General had first addressed possible changes to the regulations in 2016, his Government believed that the Sixth Committee should focus its attention on proposals that could further contribute to efficiency, particularly through the effective use of information technology, and make the most productive use of available resources. At the same time, it would be concerned about proposals that could have the effect of limiting the accessibility and usefulness to Member States of information and treaty texts made available by the Secretary-General.

82. The Sixth Committee should proceed cautiously in its consideration of any such changes and should take careful account of the views of the Secretariat with regard to any implementation issues or challenges that might be posed by particular proposals. His delegation looked forward to further opportunities to give those important issues the careful and rigorous consideration they deserved.

83. **Mr. Tōnē** (Tonga) said that the inclusion of the current topic in the work of the Sixth Committee provided the necessary platform for a timely review and modernization of the 1946 regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter and to ensure that they continued to be relevant and met the needs of Member States. As a small island developing State, Tonga relied heavily on the records and resources registered and published in the United Nations *Treaty Series*. The model instruments and treaty-making guides and handbooks provided through that platform had proven useful in its ratification and accession efforts.

84. Tonga supported the Secretary-General's call for a more enhanced role of the Treaty Section in supporting Member States. It would like to see further support and interaction from the Section, in particular through capacity-building, publications and technical assistance, which were key to ensuring inclusivity, particularly for small island developing States like Tonga. His delegation had taken part in a capacity-building seminar conducted by the Treaty Section for that purpose.

85. **Mr. Arrocha Olabuenaga** (Mexico) said that it was important for Sixth Committee to consider the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter, and to update the relevant provisions of the Regulations on Registration and Publication of Treaties and International Agreements and the *Summary of Practice of the Secretary-General as Depositary of Multilateral Treaties* in the light of contemporary treaty law and taking into account the use of new information and communications technologies, especially since both the Regulations and the *Summary of Practice* predated the entry into force of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

86. In his fourth report on provisional application of treaties (A/CN.4/699), the Special Rapporteur had showed that the practice of provisional application was inconsistent with the provisions of the Regulations and the *Summary of Practice* with regard to the practice to be followed by the Secretary-General in his capacity as depositary of treaties and in exercise of his treaty registration function. His delegation agreed with the following recommendation made by the Special Rapporteur in that report: "it is worth considering the merits of the idea that, in due time, the Commission should recommend to the Sixth Committee that the 1946 regulations on registration should be revised in order to adapt them to the current state of practice relating to the provisional application of treaties. This would serve as a guide to practice in line with the scope and content of article 25 of the 1969 Vienna Convention, which in turn would enable the Secretariat to reflect at a later time, both in the above-mentioned handbooks and in the *Summary of Practice of the Secretary-General as Depositary of Multilateral Treaties*, the new trends in the matter that are developing in accordance with contemporary practice."

87. An analysis of developments in the practice of registration and publication of treaties and other related activities would help make for a more efficient use of available resources. Similarly, the exchange of opinions between Member States would serve to identify good practices and would contribute to the progressive development of international law in that very technical area.

88. **Mr. Gonzalez** (Colombia) said that a review of practice of registration and publication of treaties was a good opportunity to review the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter in the light of the evolution of new technologies. The General Assembly should reaffirm the importance of the registration and publication of treaties and consider amendments to the regulations so as to overcome deficiencies in that regard. The real challenge was to update the registration

and publication process so that it was an incentive rather than an obstacle for the implementation of Article 102.

89. As information technology had become an essential instrument for the achievement of the objectives of Article 102 and had helped to simplify the registration and publication of instruments and the dissemination of information on such instruments, it should be possible to provide the original versions of treaties that met all the requirements electronically rather than in hard-copy form. However, that must not in any way be to the detriment of the resources which the Treaty Section received. Those resources should then be used for other indispensable tasks, such as updating the *Summary of Practice*, improving the current virtual platform for storing treaties electronically, or promoting capacity-building.

90. On the other hand, Article 12, paragraph 1, of the regulations stipulated that the Treaty Section must publish all treaties in the original languages, followed by a translation in English and in French. Thanks to the work of the Treaty Section, there were no backlogs in registration, as treaties were registered in the month following their filing. However, there were delays in the publication of the *Treaty Series* due largely to translation delays. Currently, States were urged to provide courtesy translations into English or French in order to speed up the registration process and ensure timely publication in the *Treaty Series*, but according to the Secretary-General's report, it was very rare that such courtesy translations were provided, thus delaying the registration and publication process.

91. For many States working in a language other than English or French, translation was time-consuming and costly, especially in cases none of the signatories to a treaty had English or French as an official language and the treaty in question came with many annexes. His delegation therefore called on Member States to consider whether to dispense with the need to translate treaties as part of publication process. His delegation felt that it would be sufficient to provide a brief explanation of the content of the treaty in English or French as part of the publication process. That would also release resources which the Treaty Section might use in other areas.

92. Under article 13 of the regulations, the Secretariat was required to publish every month a statement of the treaties and international agreements registered, or filed and recorded, during the preceding month, giving the dates and numbers of registration and recording. Article 14 provided that the Secretariat should send that monthly statement to all Member States. However, given that such information was published on the Treaty Section's website as soon as the treaty was registered, the monthly publication was unnecessary. The same applied for the statement of treaties published in the original language on the website. Thus, his delegation considered articles 13 and 14 to be unnecessary.

93. **Mr. Tang** (Singapore) said that his delegation welcomed the inclusion of the new item on the agenda of the General Assembly. A strong and robust international treaty framework was a critical component of a rules-based multilateral system, which was essential for the survival and success of small States like Singapore. The effective operation and implementation of treaties were vital to the rule of law at the international level. Singapore was therefore pleased that there was now a dedicated platform at the General Assembly to discuss issues relating to the international treaty framework.

94. It was an opportune moment for the General Assembly to review the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter. There were ways in which the regulations could be updated and improved to reflect technological advances and current realities. That would ensure that the regulations remained useful and relevant to Member States and would allow for an efficient use of the resources of the Treaty Section, which had been doing some outstanding work. Among its many accomplishments was the online portal – the United Nations Treaty Collection, which provided a wealth of information on treaty law and practice.

95. His delegation hoped that the current agenda item would provide a platform for wider discussion on other treaty law-related topics in the future. It also supported the inclusion of the item on the provisional agenda of a future session.

96. **Ms. Neilson** (New Zealand) said that her country was a party to some 1,700 treaties, and greatly valued the Secretariat's work in registering them, as well as the Secretary-General's role as depositary of many of them. That added transparency and coherence to the international legal order and assisted in providing clarity on the extent of States' obligations.

97. The process of registering treaties involved a considerable amount of work for both States and the Secretariat, hence there was a need for the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter to be up to date and to reflect current practice and technological developments. A review of the regulations would be beneficial for both States and the Secretariat.

98. **Mr. Fintakpa Lamega** (Togo) said that his Government welcomed the General Assembly's decision to include an item on strengthening and

promoting the international treaty framework on the agenda of the Sixth Committee. Given the current geographical imbalance in the registration of treaties, a revision of the regulations in force was vitally important so as to make registration easier, less bureaucratic, less costly and more accessible to all Member States. Togo supported the proposal that electronic means should be used to make the registration process less cumbersome and that provision should be made for a mechanism to assist developing countries in obtaining access to such technologies.

99. There was a need to speed up the publication of treaties registered with the United Nations, and his delegation would cooperate, in the informal consultations to be held at the end of the current session, in efforts to that end. The current agenda item could also be used at future sessions to consider other questions relating to treaties, such as the Secretary-General's role as depositary of multilateral treaties.

100. **Ms. Boucher** (Canada) said that Article 102 of the Charter was very clear about the responsibility of States with regard to the registration of treaties. The aim of the registration and publication of treaties was to promote transparency in the conduct of international relations and to establish a comprehensive and central source of international agreements for practical, operational and academic research purposes.

101. Although States were aware of their responsibility to register, many had been slow in doing so. For its part, Canada had registered 396 treaties between 1 January 2015 and March 2016. It should be borne in mind that States did not all have the same resources; that other organizations also registered treaties; and that it might be useful to consider revising existing practices to maximize results with the help of electronic communications.

102. Her delegation looked forward to an exchange of ideas on how to ensure full implementation of Article 102 of the Charter. Canada was committed to a rules-based international order. Treaties represented the foundation of that order, and their registration, consistent with Article 102, contributed to international stability.

103. **Mr. Nasimfar** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that treaties were the main source of international law and the cornerstone of rules-based international relations. They were also a more direct and formal method of creation of international law. The United Nations system had played an important role in ensuring the transparency of treaties concluded by its Member States.

104. His delegation took note of the Secretary-General's report (A/72/86) and was in favour of a careful consideration of the recommendations contained therein for updating the existing treaty registration regulations to reflect technological developments and current practice. His delegation also took note that the Secretary-General had indicated in the report that treaty registration appeared to be geographically imbalanced, probably due to limited awareness of the obligation to register or a lack of resources needed to do so. Continuation of the debate on the subject could heighten the awareness of Member States of the importance of registration and provide a platform for an exchange of best practices. The consideration of those recommendations could also enable the General Assembly not only to update the regulations, as appropriate, but also to consider measures to address current shortcomings in treaty registration through capacity-building and technical assistance to make registration easier and more accessible for all Member States.

105. His delegation continued to maintain that the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, which had already produced useful guidelines in the past, could be an appropriate forum to discuss the different aspects of the implementation of Article 102 as well as other treaty-related topics. It would therefore be more practical and results-oriented to include the item on the agenda of the Special Committee, instead of including it on the provisional agenda of future sessions of the Sixth Committee.

106. International treaties served as an important tool for harmonizing international relations and maintaining international peace and security. The United Nations bodies, and in particular the Sixth Committee, had an essential role to play in strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework. His delegation hoped that that process would contribute to a further strengthening of the rule of law at the international level.

107. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) welcomed the support received from all delegations for the inclusion of the current item on the agenda and the continuing interest expressed during the informative meetings held on the possibility of reviewing the regulations for the registration of treaties in conformity with Article 102 of the Charter. His delegation was also grateful for the support received from the Office of Legal Affairs, and in particular the valuable work of the Treaty Section, which had helped to identify potential courses of action for making work in the area more efficient and effective.

107. An updating of the regulations would make it possible to address the question of capacity-building in support of the treaty registration process and to encourage greater participation and transparency in the international treaty framework. His delegation hoped that the current debate and informal consultations on a review of the regulations would lead to the adoption by consensus of a draft resolution under the new agenda item that would help the United Nations continue with its modernization efforts.

109. **Ms. Kalb** (Austria) said that her country was a traditional supporter of efforts to strengthen international law and the rule of law, including multilateral treaties and was very diligent in registering its treaties. It commended the Treaty Section for the important role in played in the treaty registration process, including its assistance regarding the Secretary-General's depositary functions. Austria was therefore pleased to work with Argentina, Brazil, Italy and Singapore to bring about a necessary modernization and introduce efficiency measures for the registration of treaties.

110. Austria welcomed the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/72/86) to consider measures to address the current shortcomings in treaty registration through capacity-building, publications and technical assistance; to examine the opportunity for an exchange of views among States regarding their treaty-making practice, and analytical studies; to modernize the regulations and recognize the role of information technology; to consider amendments to recognize the role of depositaries other than the Secretary-General; to provide reliable guidelines for registration and the required documentation; to examine measures to enhance the accessibility of the register; to consider whether the current publication policy met the requirements of Member States in the light of pressure on limited resources; to examine whether to remove current requirements of translation and to consider alternative measures, such as publication of translations only when they had been provided by the registering entity and whether to reiterate the call for Member States to include translations with treaties provided for registration; and to consider broadening the policy of limited publication, given the wide range of sources where texts of multilateral treaties were available.

111. It was important to maintain the multilingual nature of the *Treaty Series*, which already contained texts of treaties in some 100 languages. A review of the translation and publication policy would be an effective way to reduce costs, address the backlog in the *Treaty Series* and ensure greater efficiency. Austria looked forward to working with all delegations to make the regulations useful and relevant and to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss, in the future, issues relating to strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework.

112. **Mr. Bukoree** (Mauritius) said that his delegation concurred with all the reasons set out in the explanatory memorandum contained in A/73/141 for the inclusion of the current item on the agenda, and it highlighted the outstanding work performed by the Treaty Section over many years, despite limited resources. A debate and possible review of the current framework might help redress any perception of a geographical imbalance with regard to the registration of treaties and might also assist in removing bureaucratic obstacles in the treaty registration process.

113. Treaties were a cornerstone of the international system and, more than ever, were essential instruments for international relations. They served to regulate subjects that were too specific and detailed to be dealt with by customary law. However, treaties did not override the principles of customary international law. On the contrary, they complemented customary international law and helped reinforce international law in general. The 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties continued to be very relevant, although its scope was limited to treaties concluded between States. Pursuant to article 53 of the Convention, a treaty was void if it conflicted with a norm of *jus cogens*. On the other hand, the international community should probably start a long-term, sustained effort to promote the 1986 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organizations or between International Organizations, which had not yet entered into force. More mechanisms should be put in place to reinforce the adherence of Member States to treaties, whether through signature, consent to be bound or eventual ratification, acceptance or accession.

114. **Mr. Carrillo Gómez** (Paraguay) said that the registration and publication of treaties contributed directly to the establishment of legal certainty for the international community and to the progressive development of international law and the dissemination of knowledge for professionals and academics. It also indirectly contributed to the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Since 1991, Paraguay had been the depositary of 148 treaties, protocols and agreements concluded under the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). The dissemination of the practice developed by the United Nations for the registration and publication of treaties was vital to ensuring consistency in the practice of States which, like Paraguay, served as depositaries for multilateral agreements and which, in carrying out those functions, contributed to the

establishment of legal certainty for the international community.

115. A society of diverse cultures and a bilingual nation, Paraguay underscored the value of diversity and encouraged the use of Spanish in the registration and publication of United Nations treaties on a par with the languages currently used. To strengthen and promote the international treaty framework, it was also important to address the provision of technical assistance to Member States and human resources training, the use of technologies accessible to all Member States, and the provisional application of treaties.

Agenda item 79: Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission (A/73/128, A/73/129, A/73/155)

116. **Mr. Nasimfar** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the Movement attached great importance to the issue of criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. The countries of the Non-Aligned Movement contributed more than 80 per cent of the peacekeeping personnel in the field and were also the major recipients of peacekeeping missions. Peacekeeping personnel must continue to perform their duties in a manner that preserved the image, credibility, impartiality, and integrity of the Organization. The Movement emphasized the importance of maintaining a policy of zero tolerance in addressing all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeeping personnel.

117. The Non-Aligned Movement urged the United Nations to continue cooperating with States exercising jurisdiction in order to provide them, within the framework of the relevant rules of international law and agreements governing the activities of the United Nations, with information and material for the purpose of criminal proceedings initiated by States. In that connection, it took note of the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel adopted under General Assembly resolution 62/214. That Strategy would help to mitigate the suffering of victims and offer them social support, legal services and medical attention.

118. Full implementation by all Member States of General Assembly resolution 72/112 and previous General Assembly resolutions could help close jurisdictional gaps, strengthen accountability mechanisms and contribute to guaranteeing due process with respect to investigations of sexual exploitation and abuse. Member States should exercise their jurisdiction in applicable cases to ensure that criminal acts did not go unpunished. It was crucial that the State of nationality acted in a timely manner to investigate and prosecute alleged crimes. All States must provide information to the United Nations on any such referrals. An assessment of the need for any further measures by the United Nations could subsequently be undertaken. Important policy and remedial measures had been agreed but still need to be implemented. Progress must also be made on short-term measures.

119. The Non-Aligned Movement reiterated its concern about alleged crimes on the part of United Nations officials and experts on mission, including allegations of corruption and other financial crimes. The Secretary-General should continue to ensure that his zero-tolerance policy for criminal activities, including sexual exploitation and abuse and corruption, was made known to all United Nations personnel on mission, especially those in managerial positions. States must take all appropriate measures to ensure that such crimes did not go unpunished and that the perpetrators were brought to justice.

120. The Non-Aligned Movement reiterated that it was still premature to discuss a draft convention on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. For the time being, the Committee must focus on substantive matters and leave matters of form for a subsequent stage.

121. **Ms. Rivera Sánchez** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that any misconduct, especially criminal behaviour, committed by United Nations personnel on mission was unacceptable. Such acts were particularly serious because of the nature of the perpetrators' functions and the vulnerability of the victimized; moreover, they undermined the image, credibility, impartiality and integrity of the United Nations.

122. CELAC took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on criminal responsibility of United Nations officials and experts on mission (A/73/128, A/73/129 and A/73/155) and also the report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/72/751). CELAC was aware of allegations, as in previous years, of sexual abuse and excessive use of force by some peacekeepers. The international community must do much more to ensure that such crimes did not go unpunished. CELAC reiterated its full support for a zero-tolerance policy in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse and other criminal conduct.

123. CELAC took note in particular of section IV of document A/73/129, which dealt with cooperation between States and with the United Nations in the exchange of information and the facilitation of investigations and prosecutions, and protection of victims and witnesses in that process. It also stressed the importance of receiving continuous information from the Secretariat on substantiated allegations. Improving on the reporting practice would benefit the understanding of the problem so that it could be properly addressed. The Secretariat should continue to work to improve the quality of information regarding possible criminal offences and to communicate such information immediately to the States concerned. The reporting process must be implemented effectively and efficiently.

124. CELAC urged States to which cases had been referred to ensure proper follow-up and to inform the Secretary-General of the actions taken by national authorities, including prosecution where appropriate; for its part, the Organization should likewise follow up on those actions. The Secretary-General and all Member States shared a responsibility for taking measures to prevent and punish criminal acts committed by United Nations personnel and to enforce standards of conduct. It was important to continue the dialogue with the Secretariat on the training and capacity-building of United Nations officials and experts on mission, and to take steps to prevent the abuse of privileges and immunities.

125. CELAC looked forward to the results of the implementation of the accountability framework developed by the Secretariat to measure the performance of field missions in connection with indicators relating to conduct and discipline. Attention should also be given to addressing other challenges, such as investigations in the field and during criminal proceedings, and the gathering and assessment of evidence in administrative and jurisdictional procedures, which must be conducted bearing in mind the interests of the alleged victims and the right of the accused to due process. United Nations personnel must comply with United Nations policy guidelines regarding their expected standards of conduct, including those set out in documents A/67/775 and A/67/828.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.